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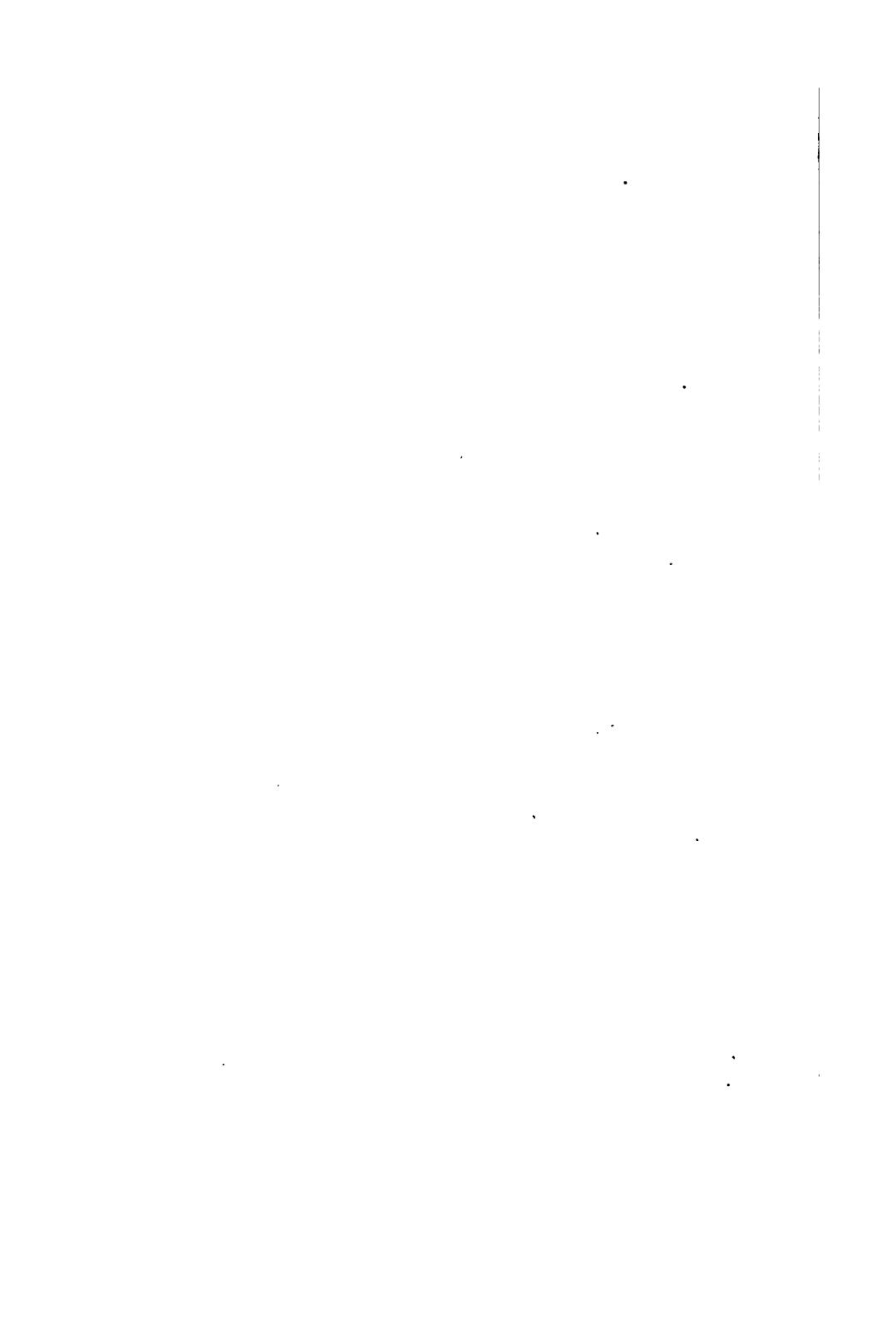
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THE EMIGRANT'S WIFE

—
VOL. I.



THE EMIGRANT'S WIFE;

OR,

ONE IN TEN THOUSAND.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Norfolk



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ONE IN TEN THOUSAND.

CHAPTER I.

IT was a sad parting for all of them ; for the affectionate girl who hung in tearful misery round her husband's neck ; for the patient blind man whose only child was leaving him, never perhaps to see him again ; for William himself, poor fellow, who was going to a far-off land away from all he loved, all he valued on earth. Talk about parting as we do, and try to accustom ourselves to the idea of it as we may, nothing seems able to lessen the blow when it does come. Everything hopeful, everything joyful, every thing good, to come from the separation, and through its means hereafter,

is forgotten at the moment of saying the last farewells, and the God bless you ! and we only feel the bitter sorrow of leaving the loved ones, now doubly, triply dear. It is only after the first tears are dried, after the sobs are suppressed, and when the trial is gone through, that our hopes and our long talked-of prospects can cheer us. And so it is when we make the great final separation—that for all earthly time—from those we love. We have to bear the blow, hopelessly at first ; but then comes the great vision of an immortal life and a sure meeting again. Where could comfort be found except in this ?

It was just as the ship was about to move out of the dock, down the river, to Gravesend. Everything was in confusion on board, confusion indescribable of sights, sounds, and smells. Some of the cargo was still loose about the deck ; men were driving choice sheep and cattle, belonging to a returning colonist, on board ; pigs for the use of the passengers, were being dragged and hustled into their styes. Hens, ducks, and geese were being packed into their coops on the

poop. Sides of beef, and whole carcases of mutton, were being hauled up aloft to keep fresh. Vegetables hung in green festoons over the stern and quarter-boats; spring-carts and cabs were bringing boxes and bundles to be shuffled out on the wharf; men, women, and children were talking, laughing, crying, and playing, and wandering about in their own and everybody else's way.

The chief officer was hurrying here, there, and everywhere, bawling at the carters and loafers, cursing the idlers, and uttering volleys of salt-water gibberish to the men aloft. All the arrangements for the departure fell—in the captain's temporary absence—to his lot, and he made the usual noise necessary and unnecessary about them. The unfortunate steerage passengers came in for numberless anathemas as they got in and out of his way; but they were only bunglers. The cunning ones, who knew that the ship would not start off like a train, at the touch of a bell, got away from the water and on to the land. There they stood, saying their last words to their sorrowing friends, among

hemp, tar-barrels, logwood, palm-oil, and other perfumed merchandise.

Bustle, hurry and confusion everywhere on the ship and near it, “upstairs” and on the “ground floor,” in the cabins and out of them. The one thing yet wanting to complete the climax of this mutual din, was an engine blowing off its steam; and that was not very far off, for the tug, paddling and puffing outside the dock, waited to pull the great ship down the river, and off to sea.

There was many a sad parting on that ship, of relatives and dear friends, who, in this world would never meet again. But the parting of the blind man and his son’s wife from the emigrant, William Chartres—going away, mayhap for ever—was the saddest of any there. The three were below on the main deck, in one of the berths composed of rough deal boards, and dignified by the name of second cabins. William stood with his left arm round his wife, and she leaned on his bosom gazing through her tears into his face. The poor father, sad enough too, heaven knows, sat on one of the boxes of luggage, and held his son’s right hand pressed

lovingly between his own. He had not the consolation of looking upon the being he valued most upon earth ; he could only turn his careworn face and his sightless eyes in the direction where he knew his son was. And thus they stood for many minutes silent. Nobody noticed them ; and they noticed no one else. At that last moment, so bitter to those who had relatives and dear friends to say farewell to, all were too sadly occupied with their own thoughts to pay any attention to what their neighbours were about.

The turmoil above and around, the crying of children who wept in unison with their mothers, the many voices, the confusion, the litter of boxes, bags, and tins ; the dirt, straws, and shavings on the floor, the miserable cell-like, comfortless rough deal bunks, cabins, and tables, made the affectionate Lucy's heart sink when she thought what her husband must go through in such a place.

" You will have to rough it here, my son," his father says, whose every sense except sight is unpleasantly acute in this second cabin. " Faugh ! the smell of this wood is dreadful."

William laughs. He is disgusted and heart-sick enough at the place. But he remembers that, even while noticing such a remark as his father's, the anxious face at his shoulder would narrowly scrutinise his, and try to find out his real thoughts. So he laughs.

"Why, father, do you think I care a fraction for all the roughing in the world just now? I don't indeed. So long as the ship carries me to Australia, that is all I want. That's all, Lucy, eh?" and he presses his wife closer to his side and looks cheerfully into her upturned eyes.

"Ah, William dear, I know how miserable you will be. You will have no one to do the smallest thing for you. If I were only—" Here the dear hand is taken off her husband's shoulder and locked in the other, showing the earnestness of the wish.

"If you were only with me. Isn't that what you meant to say? Well, madam, if you were only with me; shall I tell you what would happen if that were the case?" and his look is really cheerful, and his eye bright.

She laughs too, and blushes as well at his badinage. She was given to the crime of reddening like my ladies of the *bon-ton*, exceedingly given to it, as much indeed since her marriage as before it. She would blush when her husband praised her, blush when anyone else praised her, and even do so whenever she saw a person gazing at her sweet face.

“Now, William, you are going to make me ashamed of myself with your nonsense. Now don’t speak loud, if you must speak at all.”

“Only this would happen if you were near me,” and the gentleman looks round him, picking up his materials one by one. “First the deck would have a splendid carpet on it, then the chairs and tables would be at once transformed into rosewood articles, with all sorts of carvings and gilding ; there would be easy chairs and ottomans moreover ; those three grimy lamps would condense into one brilliant chandelier ; the small cabins would be fitted up like the king’s state rooms ; we should every one of us have rings on our fingers and bells on our toes—”

"O, don't be so foolish, William. If they should hear!"

—"And we should also have music wherever we goes. There, Lucy, that's what would happen—in imagination at least—if you were only with me."

"Please God, my son, we shall soon be with you again. That you'll soon be able to send for us," father says. They are all more pleasant now.

"I shall think every week a year, dear father, until I send you home the money for your passage."

"But we must very soon hear from you, William dear, and before you arrive in Australia, you know; for it's sure to be four or five months till then," Lucy says.

"Before then!" William repeats, as if in surprise. "Why, will you not hear from me three or four times even before I land?"

"O, yes; do you think I forget that. By every ship that you pass, mind."

"There's no fear of my forgetting, Lucy. I shall always have a letter ready waiting to send on board every vessel we speak."

"What a blessing that is, papa," and

Lucy turns round joyously to her father, "to think it is the custom for all homeward bound vessels to stop when they meet the outward bound ones, and to take their letters."

Papa smiles, and William smiles too. They pretty well understand all about ships stopping in mid-ocean for letters. But they don't undeceive Lucy. Why should they?

"In any case, you must hear from me if we put in at the Cape," William says, and he kisses his wife.

Here a voice comes from the upper deck.
"Going to haul off. Everybody ashore!"

Poor Lucy trembles as she hears the words. Her heart seems to die within her as she thinks, "Now, perhaps, for the last time in this world I am with him!" and she clings the closer to her husband. Father stands up, and with his hand held out is just beginning to say the last farewell, when William speaks:

"Not yet, father dear; not yet, Lucy darling. You can stay longer, and go ashore in one of the boats." He has felt the poor girl shuddering at the awful summons to

part ; and glad as he would be both for her and his own sake to have the worst over as soon as possible, yet he cannot let her go from him at this moment.

Father sits down ; but soon rises again, saying in a faltering voice,

“ But, William, my son, would it not be as well for all that it should be got over soon. I speak for her sake, you know.” The last is said in a whisper.

“ ‘ It,’ father ? Oh, you mean the saying ‘ good-bye !’ for a few months. Why you talk as if it were a most wonderful thing, which in these days of steam and telegraphs, it isn’t. One would imagine you thought as much of it as this silly girl does. What is it after all ?”

But the silly girl hears the great throb that shakes his bosom, though he feigns to speak so carelessly ; and she is indignant with her father for his suggestion about parting then.

“ Oh ! papa, how can you be so cruel as to wish William gone from us ? He says we may yet stay with him a little while ; and how can you feel impatient at waiting ?”

"Hush ! Lucy dearest," William says, "it was all meant for the best, to save your poor little heart any unnecessary pain. How could you be so cruel as to talk in that way?" and he points, as he whispers this question into her ear, to his father. He can say no more, at least aloud, for fear he may break down.

And it wants but a very little too that the blind man should break down. Age has not the self-control youth possesses; and the tears are silently stealing down the father's cheeks.

"Now then, every one ashore! we're casting off. Be quick, mates! Wo-oh!" a slim youth by the ladder bawls out. Then he comes down, and calls his words out again and again as he passes along the main-deck.

"I suppose there are sure to be some boats alongside, so that one can get ashore after the vessel has hauled off?" William asks him.

"Plenty of them," the sailor answers, looking, however, not at William, but at poor Lucy. "They'll charge something, of

course." And he goes up the companion again bawling, "Now then, everybody ashore!"

"I say," exclaims the youth, returning after a minute or two, and again his eyes are fixed on Lucy's sweet face, "I shall be going ashore in about half-an-hour with the agent, and your friends can come with me. It's the ship's boat, so that you'll have nothing to pay." And before William can thank him he is gone.

And now that the last minute is surely come, there arise sobs of women and broken words of men and cries of children, such as are to be heard in an outward-bound ship, where bodies and hearts are being rent from their fellows. It is sad enough to see the women kissing and weeping over those who are near and dear to them; but it is sadder still, I think, to see the faces of the men. English custom will not permit a man to weep in public, even over the body of his wife or child; and to-day the poor fellows parting from their friends are compelled literally "to grin and bear it,"—all except one or two who sobbed outright. And in

truth in such a case as this parting is, it is literally a grin under which the poor man endeavours to conceal his real emotion. The working of the lips and eyes ; the fierce, inward struggle and cry of "down, down," to the rising heart ; the trembling mouth which must be steadied ; the awful consciousness of the disgrace of being seen weeping, and the futile endeavour to put on a careless appearance ; all these produce that painful, and yet almost ludicrous look, on many of the men's faces then and there, which show how bitter it is for them to part from the friends they love.

There are husbands going away to make a home in the new land on the other side of the globe, parting from their wives and children ; sisters leaving sisters and brothers, dear friends separating, and lovers feeling acutely enough now at having to tear themselves from their sweethearts, who, poor girls, will assuredly, in hardly one instance, ever be embraced by the same well-beloved arms again. At length, the last reluctant friend slowly drags himself over the gangway, the seamen settle to their work on the cleared

decks, and below the noise lulls down into some children laughing joyously, and the sobbing of women.

By and by the emigrants go on deck, and leave our three friends almost to themselves. All are gone except one poor girl, who is kneeling down, resting her head on her box and weeping bitterly. She has just parted from her father and mother, brothers and sisters, and seems quite prostrated by grief.

What is that shock? Then the roar of steam; then the great cheer overhead, and the fainter one in the distance; then the splashing of water. Poor Lucy's heart sinks again; sinks as if it will never rise any more, and a cloud comes between her eyes and the dear face she gazes on.

They are off at last, and gliding down the great river.

"Dear, dear Lucy," William whispers tenderly, "we are out of the docks—going down the stream. Let me go on deck a moment to see when they will stop and send the last boat ashore," and he gently disengages himself from her trembling arms.

"Ah! you will not be away long, William darling ; don't stay a minute. Oh! let me be with you, close to you while I can—while I can," she pleads.

And then he goes on deck, and comes back to her with the intelligence that they have yet a few precious minutes. They are to stop in the Pool, and in about ten minutes the boat will go ashore.

"My own precious little wife," William murmurs, with his cheek pressed to hers, "do, do try and look at this more hopefully ; and remember, darling, our little children ; how soon I shall be able to send for you ; and how soon we shall all be together again in our own little home, never to part in this world ; never to suffer again—never, never for my sweet girl to work with her tender fingers for our daily bread any more. Nothing to come but happiness, Lucy dear ; and such happiness and love, my darling—and such love and happiness, Lucy!"

"Below, there ! boat's going. Come on, please !" calls the young sailor down to them.

"Lucy dearest, one look ; look at me, my darling," William murmurs, kissing the

dear face whose eyes are fast closed as if to shut out a dreadful dream.

And poor Lucy makes a great effort, and looks—ah, such a look!—into those dear, tender eyes she might never behold any more. And there is one passionate kiss, and the last close embrace is given, and her father leads her away, and the young sailor helps her into the boat, for William's eyes are blinded with tears. He dares not venture on the deck lest he may be seen. And so the great parting is; bitter and great. And they are separated!

Now she is gone, he recollects it. He had felt her put her trembling hand to his side, as if to place some little token in his waistcoat-pocket. It was just after the young sailor had told them he would put them ashore in the ship's boat, and that they would not have to pay a boatman. It was the pocket where a watch should have been, but was not. Now as he leaned against the side of the cabin, struggling with a great sob that is strangling him, he feels in the watch-pocket, and takes out the small packet his poor little wife has placed there. It is some money rolled

in a bit of paper. He looks at it; then the sight overcomes him, the sob finds a vent, and another and another yet follow.

He knows she had given him all the money she had ventured to bring out for any little expenses in getting away from the ship and to her home. He knows that when she heard from the kind young seaman how she and father could get ashore free of expense, she gave this so hardly-earned and so sadly wanted, money to her husband. Ah! has she not, perhaps, left herself penniless; and has not she and father, heart-broken and trembling and faint though she is, to walk all those weary miles from where they land to far-off Holloway.

“My wife, oh! my darling, my suffering, patient Lucy,” he sobs to himself, “may God ever bless you!” And he stamps his foot and clenches his hands, and swears to conquer misfortune for her dear sake. “By the —” and he wildly utters a bitter oath, “it will go hard with me, but I will soon provide for her in the country I am going to.”

CHAPTER II.

MR. CHARTRES, the old man of the last chapter, was a ruined merchant, and William, the emigrant, was his son. It need not be said who Lucy was, for we already know her as the wife of William. The elder gentleman was blind, and the troubles which he had undergone made him appear considerably more aged than he really was. For although we style him the old man to distinguish him from his son, he was only two-and-fifty. And as they say that from thirty-five to fifty-five are the best years of life, a man is hardly entitled to patriarchal honours until he is past the latter age. He was still in the best years of his life then, that is to say, the best years for a successful man; and yet he looked very much nearer to seventy than to fifty. His manner of

movement, consequent on his severe blindness, gave him, as it would any one with a grey head, a somewhat decrepit appearance ; and yet bodily, barring the eyesight, he was a hale man. He was a noble-looking man, too, in spite of his being but a wreck of what he had been—not many years past—one of the finest looking men “on ‘Change,” and the lines of trouble which seamed his placid, thoughtful-looking face, appeared a positive advantage to his dignity ; and dignified he was—one of Nature’s own gentlemen, all the more valuable because they are so rare ; dignified in his appearance, in his deportment, in his language, in his affections ; even in his poverty.

As we have already said, he was a ruined man now ; ruined apparently without the probability of redemption, for the loss of his eyesight bereft him of all opportunity of making his way upward again. It was now several years since his break down, and his wife died shortly after that great calamity, leaving him with their only child, a young lad at the time.

Mr. Chartres had been a merchant, a great

City magnate ; but that was all over now. And here he was, just existing on an annuity of forty pounds a year, which at his bankruptcy his creditors had been merciful enough to purchase for him. They had been paid nineteen shillings in the pound. An income of forty pounds a year to one who had been accustomed to spend more on his household expenses in a week ! This was all ; and yet the man remained none the less noble and dignified for that. Nay, even in his poverty he was rather the more haughty to strangers, more unmixing, more retired than in his days of prosperity ; and his son William was, in like matters and circumstances, exceedingly similar to him.

At the time of his father's failure, William was just preparing for the University, full of high hopes and joyful aspirations, and abounding in all the poesy of thought and beauty of body possessed by his mother, who was a native of sunny Spain, where her husband saw, loved, and married her. The shock of the downfall gave the lad a cruel blow. Such a shock it was, such a downfall. Not a loss of friends by death, one

which youth, however affectionate, soon gets over ; not a mere step down the ladder of riches, where one could still be on an equality with decent people and find no need to stoop. No, this was a push off the steps—off them, and down into the mud on which they rested ; a fall from affluence to poverty ; from comfort to misery ; down, down into the mire where ordinary men can do little but grovel and bow the neck in order to live at all, or lie down and die in order to preserve their self-esteem to the last.

The poor lad in his most impressionable days knew what poverty meant ; and the experience left its traces upon him to the end of his life. His father had just fifty pounds remaining after giving up his property to his creditors, and with barely the necessary furniture, he and his wife removed to a paltry little house of four rooms near Camden Town.

Mrs. Chartres was an accomplished and lovely woman at the time, and even then almost as beautiful as in her younger days, though her son was at this time so nearly a man.

William had not his mother's blue eyes, nor even his father's grey ; he had his Castilian, or rather his Arragonese grandfather's dark hazel. The colour of the eye, like other traits, often skips one generation. His mother had once been to her old home after she had married, when her son was about two years old. She went to see her aunt who was dying, and she stayed to cheer her father's loneliness for some months after his sister's death, until, at length, the Don, by the advice of his friend the Padre, took a nearer and a better comforter in the person of a second wife. With her he went to Murcia. We here see that Castilian was the first language William Chartres spoke ; and this fact has much to do with his after life ; so let it be remembered.

As to poor Mrs. Chartres we have no more to say. She had been a dear, loving, patient wife and an affectionate mother, doing good in this world, and now surely enjoying her reward in the next.

William who was seventeen at the time of his father's ruin, was just home from school, and dawdling about his father's

offices and ships for a short holiday previous to going into the University. Ah, me ! how all his plans were changed in one short day.

When they moved to Camden Town he sent to a scholastic agency office, and through its means got a tutorship in the neighbourhood of Clapham—that metropolis of the scholastic world. Hopefully enough at first did he enter on his duties, much with the same kind of visions indeed as Nicholas Nickleby entertained himself with on his way to Yorkshire. Like Nicholas, too, his prospects soon vanished away in Overland House, which although not exactly a Dotheboy's Hall in Mr. Squeers's sense of the word, was exceedingly like it in many respects.

At this place of purgatory for ushers, he remained six months, and left it to go to another school, better at all events than the first, for no school and no master, save and except Mr. Squeers's property and person, could have been more miserable as a home, or more ignorant as a teacher—even of ordinary grammar and spelling. Another

slow year gone, and William settled down into the usual school usher, and went from place to place teaching in pretty well all quarters of the kingdom. So he reached his twentieth year.

He found, at last, a place as comfortable as an usher's place could very well be; and here he remained for more than two years, until his principal sold the establishment and went abroad. True the salary was not much, only seventy pounds a year; but then he added to it by teaching Spanish and French, and Italian people English; and altogether he considered himself a pretty successful individual for an usher.

CHAPTER III.

PERSONALLY we are all pretty well acquainted with the infatuation which, at some period or another of our days of early manhood, makes us wish for a red coat on our backs and a long sword by our sides ; and theoretically, we can understand the spirit which leads young military men of small means to beggar themselves in a futile endeavour to cope with their more wealthy companions. The British Army, as it is at present constituted,* and which affords us good gentlemen and bad soldiers for officers, is no place for a man who has not at the least five hundred a year besides his pay.

This sum is just what George Henley had not when he was gazetted Ensign without purchase to the —th Regiment, then stationed in Dublin. He was the son of an officer

* Written in 1870.

killed fighting for his country in India, and shortly after this event procured the commission he now held. How he ever managed to pay his expenses, or rather to keep from paying them, he best knew, for certainly nobody else ever did; but he struggled on into his lieutenancy, and then married a girl with a dowry of two or three hundred a year.

He was an exceedingly handsome young man, and consequently one who was accustomed to be much petted by the women. Now being petted by the women, however comfortable and pleasant it may be, is nothing less than a luxury, and like all luxuries, it is expensive. So after having been married, and being petted worse than ever by his wife—and mind you, a wife's petting often makes many a man otherwise humble-minded think too much of himself—for nearly two years, and made more fond than ever of his luxury, he lost his wife shortly after his only child Lucy was born.

After this he seemed to spend his money, and to get into debt and difficulty with even more facility than formerly; and by the time Lucy was four years old, the property

his wife brought him had passed out of his hands, and left him entirely dependent on his Captain's pay, for he was now a captain.

Upon her mother's death, Lucy had been put out among strangers to nurse ; among strangers, for somehow or another, her father had unfortunately managed to quarrel with all his relations ; and now he had not a friend who cared enough for either himself or his child, to take charge of her. When she was eight years old, he sent her to a boarding-school near London, and was himself sent by his debts to India. Here he went on much as usual, in addition to which he followed the Eastern custom of looking more after other people's homes than his own. And it is sad to have to relate, that his wild career was cut short by assassination, no one knew by whom, though people at the time said that the jealousy of a native merchant had something to do with it.

Lucy, poor child, was in her fifteenth year at this time, and was, every mail, looking forward to the announcement that she was to come out to India at once to her father, and

marry a great man immediately on landing. Her anxiety was lest the Commander-in-Chief, or Governor, who was to take her, might not be young, say five-and-twenty at the most, and very handsome, with dark eyes and a sorrowful countenance.

Her father had, up to the time of his death, managed to pay her schoolmistress pretty regularly, at very uncertain intervals however ; and consequently when she became an orphan, there were only nine months' fees due—about fifty pounds.

She did not, poor child, break her heart at her father's death, for she hardly remembered him ; but she cried and fretted a good deal, fretted at the loss of her Indian heroes, and at the darkening of all her romantic prospects in the East.

It was not very easy for her at first to comprehend her utterly forlorn condition ; and it was only by degrees, rather rapid steps it is true, that she became fully conscious of her hard lot. Her school was her home, such as it was, and her schoolmistress her mother, such as she was ; and she loved both of them in that sort of way in which

people come to love inferior things in the absence of superior ones.

Mrs. Bridgeman was not a hard-hearted woman, it is true ; but she was only a mortal, and all mortal teachers—some, according to their own account, are angels—must of necessity make a decided difference between a profitable pupil and an under-governess, which latter poor Lucy became at a yearly remuneration of her food and some of the well-used clothes of her employer, plus a pound or two now and then. So her bright dreams faded even before her childhood did.

Poor Lucy, whose soul was naturally a very home for every beautiful and romantic feeling, had now but little time to spare for thought from her every day duties.

It was not a large school—that of her mistress—there being only about fifteen boarders; but considering that the girl had to do work both as a kind of servant and as a governess as well, it was very much too large for her. When we say that she had servants' work to do, we do not mean that she worked in the kitchen, or had to go down on all fours scrubbing the boards.

But washing and dressing children, dusting parlours and drawing-rooms, helping to make beds and getting up cuffs, collars, and other fine fallals is servants' work ; and all this Lucy had to do. There were three teachers resident, the principal, a second governess, and Lucy. The companionship of the hired governess, however, did not very much lighten the girl's labour by society.

If, as in most occupations in this world—except teaching in a boarding-school—assistants were accustomed to remain in one house for a number of years, her case might have been different. But seeing that in the manner of school-principals all over England, Mrs. Bridgeman changed her governesses as often as three and four times in the course of a single year, there were but few opportunities for Lucy to make a lasting friendship under that roof.

By the end of three or four years the poor girl had made the acquaintance of so many teachers' faces, that she quite forgot their names and ways ; and finally she, like her pupils, became accustomed to look upon

each comer merely as the last new governess. Young people are not at all prone to make up moral lessons by drawing comparisons ; but young as Lucy was she often thanked her Maker that she was in many respects so much better off than many other governesses. When Mrs. Bridgeman advertised, quite a crowd of eager applicants would come to her house ; and it often made the child's heart sink to think of her lot, had she to go about seeking for a place like the careworn dull-eyed women who came to her mistress. It was a fact, which she saw quite easily, that the applicants for servants' places who came, always looked much brighter and happier than those who applied for teachers' situations.

CHAPTER IV.

Lucy retained her old position ; and Mrs. Bridgeman's academy flourished more than ever. Drawing-masters came to the place, slim looking careless gentlemen whose names were famous in a sort of way, and whose marvellous facility with the pencil those who could afford to pay half a guinea a lesson for imitating, thought much indeed of. These artists—there were several of them, young and old, in Lucy's time—were not, however, the very grandest of men in the eyes of the eldest pupils ; for somehow or another they happened to be invariably ugly. Not one of them was even passable. Whether the cause was the turned down collars, or the cloaks, or the long hair, or the slouched hats, or what is far more probable, the muddy linen and the general unkempt appearance of these

lovers of nature, cannot be, with certainty, known.

Music masters attended Harley House. One—the head of all—never was superseded, a stout, large-headed, thick-moustached professor, bearing marvellously blue cheeks and marvellously white linen. He was the *beau ideal* of a professor, not to be sure the slim, tall, small-headed hero, as he should be on the stage ; but the living, working, successful phaeton-driving professor—music personified, made real, fat and thriving. He taught both playing and singing, and what is surprising he really took pains and taught well too.

Professor Alba was on his cards, Mr. White was his homely English name. But as he was invariably styled simply “the professor,” the translation did not matter much. Now he, in spite of his fat, was a divinity in the eyes of the elder pupils. His finger-nails and high-heeled boots were the very essence of beauty. The very house-maid was said to be passionately in love with him. Even Mrs. Bridgeman never let him depart from the house without nourishing

him with cake and wine. And yet with all his success, there and everywhere else, he had no tricks. He did not let his hair grow down his back ; he wore no slouched hats nor marvellous capotes ; nor did he roll his fine eyes before the governesses, or do anything else outlandish and beautiful as young artists are often accused of doing.

He was a bachelor, fond of talking, and the very head of compliment-payers to the ladies, young and old—old. Mark that ye who want to emulate his success. In after years, Lucy often thought kindly of the professor, and the pains he so good-naturedly took in teaching her to sing and play. For to him she well knew she was indebted for her finished style of singing English ballads, which, by the by, the good professor by no means despised as his brethren generally affected to do.

Lucy Henley was, at this period, a sweet amiable little creature, looking rather a child than a woman, although she was now eighteen years old. Her form and features were undoubtedly pretty ; but yet one could not help wondering how little effect that had

upon her. Her face, in repose, was the face of a statue, without its regularity of outline; and her face animated was merely a face active, as a nurse's might be who was cross with a child, or a governess's who was pleased with a pupil. It wanted soul, it wanted mind, it wanted what every woman's face absolutely must have to be truly lovely—heart. So with her form, so with her carriage. Beauty existed in them, and yet lack of the power of beauty. It may be said to be a strange combination, but yet it was one to be found very much oftener than we may imagine, if we could always feel that the beauty exists. We do sometimes feel this in the case of severe though expressionless regularity of outline, though seldom in the more common phase of irregularity.

Lucy's innate beauty was not then for every man to perceive. It seemed to exist only for him whose love could take it upon trust. It was not to blossom for all the professors who paid her small compliments on her quickness at learning, nor for the young fellows who knew by church-sight the pretty governess at Harley House, nor for

the men who, in the street, sometimes turned round to look at her, often giving a second glance of dissatisfaction. It was, as we have said, to blossom in its after exquisite loveliness for him whose faith and love were to take it upon trust, to nourish her heart and thus to nourish her beauty to its perfection. She had large clean-cut grey eyes, shaded by long dark eyelashes, and broad full eyebrows; a mouth whose chief peculiarity lay in its wondrously short upper lip; even, small, teeth; and with these not uncommon attributes of beauty, the most noticeable thing about her was the small size of her exquisite head.

There was thus, it is seen, nothing extraordinarily wonderful about her; no orange eyes, no chiselled nose, no blue black raven's-wing tresses, no mysterious look in her face. After her marriage, she became simply a lovely creature, lovely in face and lovely—far more lovely—in her winning endearing ways, growing ever more beautiful under the influence of her affection for her husband, gaining week by week beauty and grace, instead of losing them, as nearly every

woman invariably does after her marriage.

About this time there was a change of professors at Harley House. The "mathematical" one went abroad, and William Chartres reigned in his stead. This was just about the time when his prospects seemed brightening, and as usual the most likely time for him to venture to fall in love. Which, in fact, he did ; and which too, Lucy Henley did at the same moment, and that was the very first time they met.

"If I ever am to have a wife, that girl must be she," said the struggling young professor after the second meeting.

"My ideal ; my beautiful dark-eyed, pale-faced husband ; if it please God to grant me life-long bliss," thought the hard working little governess.

William's father had married for love and been happy in his union. His son also married for love.

Of course, in such a courtship there were innumerable difficulties ; and equally, of course, those very difficulties gave a sort of piquancy to the affair, which no possible amount of smoothing the way could. From

the first, there was ever the one grand shadow looming over the pair ; and this was Mrs. Bridgeman's jealousy of Lucy, and of every other grown up female in the house.

We are not here going to give a long account of how all difficulties were got over, or of how the courtship progressed. Suffice it to say that it did go on—on to its natural termination—matrimony ; and that Lucy Chartres was as happy a girl as any in her Majesty's dominions. Of course, William consulted his father about his marriage, and gained his full consent. Indeed, it was on his poor father's part that he did get married at the time. His father loved Lucy from the moment he first knew her, and William well knew how delightful her cheerful society would be to his poor father while he was out nearly all the day, and how attentive she would be to every wish and want of her new parent. It used to grieve him when he thought how wearily the time must pass, day by day, month after month, to him who was once so active, but could not now so much as solace himself with a newspaper or book, or even a walk.

When he came home of an evening, he could see from the eagerness of his reception, how lonely his father must have been all the day. But now there would be an affectionate daughter for him, one who would be with him always, talk to him, read to him, lead him out, and make his life as happy as love and attention could make it.

William Chartres at this time was earning about a hundred a year, and this with his father's fifty would, he thought, be enough to live frugally upon until something better turned up. If, after a year or two, he did not succeed in doing better in England, why then he would emigrate, as we already know he did do. And so he married, and he and his wife were as happy a couple as any in the world.

Theirs was a curious love ; different from love's usual course in the beginning, and different in its progress. In William's heart it was not a bright flame lighted up in a few days, burning fiercely during his courtship, and then diminishing to a very insignificant spark indeed after the honeymoon, succeeded by mere commonplace "conjugal friend-

ship." When he first saw Lucy, it is true that he said inwardly, "If it please Providence, that girl shall be my wife." But this was merely the prescience of what was to come. His love did not just then begin to flame very brightly. It was lighted, that was all, just set glowing; but every day increased its temperature. It must have been exceedingly unlike the love of other men; for he never could remember feeling those so common ecstatic thrills which a touch of the hand, or a glance of the eye will produce in other mortals under the influence of the "invincible god." When he first lost his heart to Lucy, he did not lose his head as well. Indeed, if he ever did make a "fool of himself"—which showing one's affections is styled—it happened rather after he was a married man, a Benedick. Probably it was the same idiosyncrasy that made his love so peculiar at first, that afterwards made it so lasting and strong.

If these young people had felt only the everyday kind of affection for one another, probably nothing like what happened in after times could have taken place. But their love

was out of the common track ; and as their love was, so were their after deeds—peculiar.

The marriage took place privately enough. Mrs. Bridgeman gave an exceedingly reluctant consent to it. But to do her justice, it must be related that once her consent was given, she entered heart and soul into the affair.

All women revel in matchmaking, and Mrs. Bridgeman was no exception to the general rule. She was a woman of some means now ; and she gave her daughter—as she soon began to style Lucy when other people showed they valued her—fifty pounds as a wedding present. She, in fact, now really took the place of a mother to the girl, that is to say as well as it could be taken by a stranger, and invited the young professor and his father very frequently to her house ; gave him the usual permission for visiting his sweetheart (vulgar word !), as often as he chose, and really took, as the great day drew nigh, an intense interest in the match.

William, as we have said, never lost his head at this momentous time ; and it is

worthy of special note that on more than one occasion he allowed other and more pressing matters to keep him from his usual evening visit to Harley House. Once, indeed, he went the fearful length of remaining no fewer than three entire days and nights without calling, upon which Mrs. Bridgeman was indignant, and would have rated him soundly at being the cause of her dear child's many sighs and tears, if she had dared ; but she did not dare. For the fact was, there was that about the struggling, hard-working young fellow which would much better have become a king or a judge, or a man of twenty thousand a year than a tutor.

Yes ; that *je ne sais quoi*, which, while it is found only in persons of a superior breeding and education, is not so very often found even among them. It was not wholly reserve, for he was often free enough with his conversation ; nor haughtiness, for in his own estimation he was the meanest of mortals ; nor misanthropy, for he was no Timon ; nor vanity, for that would have had no influence except a debasing one. It was,

perhaps, a mixture of the first three which made what it exactly was, because in his heart there was not a trace of the last. He was the sort of man whom it would seem presumption to blame. If he were to sit silent listening, and not even to put on his own contemptuous look, the greatest roysterer, or the most violent scold, would be likely only to feel their own terms fly back from him like an echo from a wall and reproach themselves. Such an attribute is not a pleasing one, and far from being a help in a man who has to make his bread by pleasing others, then of course his temporary superiors, it is a decided point against him.

William well knew this; and it cost him many an hour's grief. But try as he might, he could no more get rid of it than he could of his memory.

It gave him, it is true, an immense appearance of power; and doing so it made many a girl wish to be his wife, though but few men except his inferiors, and those who really knew him well, wished to be his friends. It was, indeed, what every girl dreams of as an attribute in her ideal husband. So most

women will readily understand what it was.

Lucy, like others, had for years dreamed of it in *her* ideal hero-husband. She perceived it in William before they had met three times, and feared and loved it. After her happy marriage she came to know all its phases, and then she loved it all the more because she knew it set other men against him.

Did she not perceive, too, its power over other women than herself? Yes; and adored it because of the sweet jealousy it could create.

"He is mine," she could repeat, "my own for ever!" and her jealousy, like a little child looking at apparent danger from the shelter of its mother's bosom, hiding its face, and withal gazing again and again, could show itself, trembling at its own daring, and protect itself at length securely in the bosom of his love! It was fascinating, such as all jealousy is at first. Though never but once had it the horrible fascination of a jealousy believed to have a foundation.

Mrs. Bridgeman gave the bride away; and gave the breakfast, as the winebibbing

noonday marriage feast is called. The elder pupils were all wild with delight. Three of them acted as bridesmaids to their pretty governess ; they and a young surgeon, a schoolfellow of William's, were all the company.

Now Lucy, all the time of her happy courtship, had been undergoing the most unusual change for the better. Before she knew William she had nothing to live for but hope, and that only of the usual degree which every young person must feel ; nothing beyond. When she knew she was loved, then she gained what her affectionate heart wanted. She had an aim in life, and such an aim ! Now she was blest indeed ; now she changed from being listless, dull-minded and sad-eyed, into being active, bright-eyed and happy. Love rapidly worked its truly magic changes on both mind and body ; and when her husband led her to the altar, the very sexton declared them the handsomest couple who had been married there in the course of his sixteen years' connection with the church.

CHAPTER V.

Lucy's fifty pounds helped to furnish the cottage more suitably for a married man than it had been. That delightful spending of money during the first day of the honeymoon! Waiting to get bargains at auctions in the neighbourhood; and both buyers going together to bid. For the happy little matron it had all the excitement of gambling—winning always; purchasing what he liked, thinking what pleasure the things would afford him. All her thoughts were for the beloved husband whose strong arm and faithful heart had raised her from the dead level of mere existence to a pinnacle of joy which her happiest dreams had not pourtrayed. That fond, trusting bosom of hers throbbed for him only almost to the for-

getting of her separate existence, except as a creation which gave him happiness.

Of course, it was long since determined by Lucy that she was to assist in the making of money. She was not by any means the girl to sit idle.

“If you won’t let me teach, William dear, then I must only do servant’s work at home instead of keeping a girl. Do you think I became your wife to make you work even harder than you had to do before?”

“And why not, Lucy? It is only just that I should work the harder. If I have the luxury of possessing such a precious little treasure as yourself, it is only right that I should try and pay for it. Mind your own business, madam, and stay in-doors, and try to be lovely and happy for me every evening when I come home. That is all I want, and more than I deserve.”

“You shall not work the harder, sir. Harder indeed! I must have you work the less and earn the more too, so that when you grow old and tired of me, you may have plenty of money.”

Lucy went out then for nearly a year after

her marriage, giving lessons mostly in music and singing. Here again, as in everything else, she was gifted above many other mortals, for her notes were as sweet and pure as ever came from the throat of a woman. She was pretty fortunate in her venture ; and got her first engagement through Mrs. Bridgeman. It was to teach two grown girls to sing, without their previously having the necessary qualification—a voice. However, she got on with them pretty well ; for in order to make a connection, she really worked very hard. Many parents imagine that a teacher with a good voice should be able to communicate it to their children.

Lucy soon got other engagements ; for she was a favourite wherever she went, with women almost as much as with men. Her bright face, lady-like manners, and her now daily increasing beauty made her loved by everybody. With her five or six sets of pupils on hand, she managed to make about sixty pounds a year, which was a great addition to her husband and father's one hundred and fifty pounds ; and William found it so too.

Precious little helpmate ! She was not content with this even, for after a few months' work, she one evening at tea triumphantly produced ten pounds.

"Do you two gentlemen know what this money is for ?" she asks joyously.

"More cash, Lucy !" says father.

"Yes, dear papa, ten pounds ; think of that !" with her childlike laugh of pleasure.

"Why, father, she is going to make more than I. But where did you get all that, Lucy ? Nobody owed you so much ?" her husband says.

"No, sir ; nobody owed it me. I only owed it to myself, and I have been paying it to myself, too, for ever so long, for I want to buy a sewing-machine."

"A sewing-machine, my child ! what is that for ?" asks father, and he answers himself. "For some one else's things besides hers and yours and mine, William," and papa laughs wickedly at this sly allusion to his grandchild.

"And so, Mrs. Chartres," says William, "you have been hoarding all this money up,

keeping it, in fact, from us all, robbing somebody!"

"No, my darling," returns the little woman, gleefully, "I have only been robbing two things well able to afford it: that is, able to afford what share of the money I have taken from them."

"How is that, my child?" inquires father; "who are the individuals so well able to afford it?"

"Oh, they are, indeed, well able to bear it, and much more, too," says the dear girl, stoutly. She is afraid, lest she should draw too much sympathy to her self-denial. "They are only my two feet. Omnibuses, you know, you thought cost me two shillings a day, and so they did at first; but I soon cut that down to one shilling, and walked a little the more. By that I saved five shillings a week, you see; and five shillings a week, you know," she continues, talking very fast, as if to make nothing of the matter, for she sees the expression on her husband's and father's faces, "comes in twenty-six weeks to six pounds ten shillings; and I saved in other ways, too. So you see my feet made more than half the ten pounds."

If either father or son had been given much to show their emotion, now was an occasion for their eyes to fill with tears ; and so father's did as he scolded his dear child for being thus so regardless of herself at such a time. William chid her too ; but in a way that brought the tears into her bright eyes, tears of pleasure to know how much her self-denial was appreciated ; and she was well repaid for all her trouble in the pleasure of thus being chidden by them both.

The sewing-machine was, of course, not for home use. They all knew that before it was said. It was to be a means of bringing in money, when Lucy could no longer travel about to her pupils. Buying this machine was entirely her own idea ; nobody had suggested such a thing as that she should do manual labour. That evening, happy as it was, many a pang shot through the young husband's heart to think that with all his earnest strivings, he was not in a position to support his wife and future family in respectability and comfort by his own unassisted labour.

The little stranger came ; and of course the

music tuition had previously been dropped, never to be resumed, as will be seen. Yes, baby came and made them the happier by its presence, and the more united, if that were possible. But somehow or another, after that year of baby's coming, Fortune never favoured them in England again. So far from favouring, she actually deserted them as it would seem altogether. When Mrs. Chartres was about again, she set to work at her sewing-machine. A great house in the City furnished the work, and the little servant maid carried it to and from town.

Sewing is not a remunerative thing. It was a great week for Lucy when she earned a pound. The best general average was about fifteen shillings ; and this but too often fell away to a much lower average still according to the season. Poor Lucy did not complain of being paid too badly, she only wanted enough work to do : and this she never got.

At this time, also, Chartres' connection began to fall off, as connection often does from some unexplained reasons. At all events, William had no idea why his work

should fail. Mrs. Bridgeman's establishment, which was worth forty pounds a year to him, was removed to Brighton by its new owner. The old lady herself had sold it, and was now actually on her honeymoon trip with a half-pay naval commander.

Such was the state of affairs about two years and a half after William's marriage; while still another child came to add to the expenses. And now worse and worse—William became ill. His very life was in danger for about ten days, and his fond little wife showed out grand and noble as ever woman has showed in a home of sickness and penury. Few pens can do justice to the trials and duties of a loving, faithful woman in a husband or child's sick-room. None could do full justice to Lucy's.

How shall we tell of her fond attention to her dear husband's every glance, her thoughts for his welfare, her day watching and her sleepless nights by his side; her agony of mind, too, which she dared not show to father, or even fully confess to herself, lest she should lose all her strength at this time, and so perhaps lose him whom her love must save.

“Oh! God,” she used to pray unceasingly, “spare him, only spare him to me, and I ask nothing more. No matter what trouble, what misery, what poverty and humiliation Thou sendest upon us, only let him live, and I will bear all cheerfully—cheerfully!”

This was her cry, and her work was to save him. Until that was done she must be strong.

He got round again, out of all danger, well enough to get up in the evening and sit by the fire; and that done, poor Lucy gave way and had her turn of suffering from nervous fever. She recovered in about a fortnight, however; and the busy machine had to go on again—now working for all.

When William was strong enough to work again, he could get none to do. All his connection was lost. There was no prospect before him but one—to emigrate. The sale of the best of their furniture paid his passage in the steerage, and left him five pounds over for his capital on landing. And so he went away, as we know, to find a new home in a new country beyond the great seas.

CHAPTER VI.

THE hours and days are very long to us when those we love are away. They were so, in truth, to Lucy, for the eight weary months during which she heard no tidings of her husband. If father, with his good sense and his knowledge that things will exist as they are, not as we wish them to be—had not been with her to comfort her, she would have suffered almost beyond endurance after the sixth month had gone by and no letter had come.

She, for a time, had indeed looked impatiently to receiving that letter which was to be brought by that particular ship that was to stop in mid-ocean to take it on board. But in due time father explained the probabilities of such a case. However, he fixed a time beyond which William's silence could

not go. "We shall hear from him, my love, by the sixth month, not before."

"Six months, papa, and he has been away now only two!"

"We must be patient, my child. Remember that the voyage will last at least four months, and then the overland mail may be two months in returning. William, too, might possibly have to wait nearly a month before the first mail leaves Melbourne after he gets there. The Indian steamer may break down, as it often does, there is more delay again. Yet, my dear, all that won't affect his safety and prosperity."

"If he should be lost, and we were never to—"

"Lost! Why what in the world," father put on an angry tone here—at least he tried to do it, "what in the world are you saying, Lucy? Ships are never lost going to Australia now-a-days. Try and talk more sensibly, my child. The fact is that—that—" Father's knowledge of what had happened that very year to two Australian ships made him, at this moment, fix his thoughts so intently on the dreadful catas-

trophes, that he for a while almost forgot Lucy's remark. "The fact is that ships are never lost. Nonsense. Impossible!" he continued.

But very possible the loving wife knew it was ; and from possibility her fears many a time would drive her to probability ; thence they would go on almost to certainty. But they dared not stay there ; but would shrink back to possibility, and here her fervent prayers to that heavenly Father in whom she so faithfully trusted would give her peace.

And thus the months passed, passed slowly and wearily for both wife and father.

One day as usual, Lucy, attended by the little maid who looked after the children while their patient mother worked for them, went into the City. The girl carried back the finished work to one of the large warehouses there. This was within a few days of eight months since William had sailed. Lucy was sad enough to-day, poor thing ! thinking moodily and drearily her old thoughts since he had left her, the burden to every one of which was, "What has become

of my husband, why has he not written to me?"

In Cheapside she saw a newspaper placard announcing the arrival of the Australian mail, and mentioning that tremendous excitement existed concerning the discovery of some new gold fields in Northern Australia. Her heart leaped. The mail had arrived two days before its time : and surely this was a happy omen for her. Thus she thought as she walked the quicker along the crowded street.

As she stopped a moment to allow some persons to pass her, she noticed a gentleman with a very bronzed face attentively looking at her. She fancied that she had seen the face before. Then she walked on ; and as she glanced quickly back to see whether she might not have unwittingly passed some old acquaintance, she saw that the gentleman was standing looking after her. Their eyes met ; and he immediately came up to her and put out his brown hand.

"How do you do, Mrs. Chartres ? I am so glad I have met you. I have this very day returned from Australia."

“How do you do?” said Lucy, rather confused. Yet she put her hand into his, all the while asking her memory who this gentlemanly man could be.

“I am afraid Chartres has by this time found what a failure those new so-called diggings are.”

He looked very pleasant, and had a very engaging smile, and he spoke as if he were with a very old and valued friend.

“You mean the new diggings in Northern Australia?” Lucy said, recollecting the placard.

Her companion now offering his arm, said “Yes.”

Lucy still racking her memory to know who this gentleman could be, took the offered arm. At all events he knew William, seemed to be his friend; this almost reassured her.

“Has he said anything about this failure? Did he mention it in his last letter?” continued the gentleman in quite an intimate way.

“You mean Mr. Chartres,” said Lucy, suddenly recovering her thoughts from their

speculations concerning the propriety of her accepting a stranger's arm. "He has not written one line home since he left us," she continued, her voice trembling with emotion. Then she recollect ed that what she had said might imply the dread possibility of her own dear husband being unmindful of his wife and children, so she quickly added, "That is—I mean—of course, he has written, but the letters have miscarried."

Her companion looked round into her face with a genuine stare of amazement. "How extraordinary—how unfortunate!" he said. "Why I saw him writing the very day we arrived in Melbourne. He said he was writing to you; and it happened that we both posted our English letters together. He left Melbourne in a half-decked boat the next day, and he told me he intended to write home again when he got to the diggings."

"I am miserable about it. I don't know what to do," said the poor girl in a passionate tone of hopelessness. Even the stranger's presence could not prevent her voice showing her emotion. "There must

be a letter from him this mail, or I shall—" she had nearly said "die," but added, "be so disappointed" instead.

"I am so sorry for you," this friend of William's said compassionately. "We must inquire at the post-office about those missing letters. It must be dreadful for you not to have heard from your dear husband for so long."

"It is indeed dreadful," Lucy almost sobbed. Her grief hindered her saying any more.

And now she was silent; and the engrossing conversation about the letters having ceased, the stranger bethought himself that he had not as yet made his excuses to her for introducing himself so abruptly.

"As you have not heard from Mr. Chartres, you must think my conduct very extraordinary in the way I have introduced myself. I flattered myself into the belief that my name might be known to you through my dear friend's mentioning it in his letters. My name is Masham. I went out in the ship with Mr. Chartres."

"I did not know," said the little woman,

naïvely ; "and," smiling, "I did not like to ask you who you were." They were speaking now like old acquaintances. Was he not William's friend ?

"Do you recollect, Mrs. Chartres when you and William and his father were standing together as the ship was about to start, a sailor saying he would get you ashore in the ship's boat ? I am that sailor ; only now, you see, I am dressed in 'shore-going clothes,' as we sailors say."

Lucy now recollected the face and voice well. "Oh, we have often thought so much of your kindness," she said gratefully.

"William and I are now fast and firm friends," he said, not alluding to Lucy's little compliment. "I trust, too, that for his sake you and your dear father will allow me to be your friend. Will you not?" he asked, smiling.

"Any one, Mr. Masham, who is my dear husband's friend, is also mine."

"Thank you, very much. And will you permit me to call upon you? I may, perhaps, be able to tell you a good deal about our voyage which will interest you. If you

will give me your card, I will come and see you this evening."

"I live at No. 5 — Terrace," with a blush. "I—I—have not any cards with me," poor Lucy said; in fact she had no visiting cards at all, her original stock was run out, and she had no need to renew it. "But you will perhaps remember my address."

Mr. Masham would certainly not forget it. And then, with such a compassionate look as he never would have put on had he been able to avoid doing so, he said,

"As you have your servant with you, probably you are going about some business, so I need not call a cab for you?"

"Thank you, no;" and Lucy gave an inquiring look into his face which made him curse his stupidity as he went away, "I shall not want one."

And after a few more words they separated; he to go to his hotel, she to plod her way to the warehouse for her supply of work, and afterwards to walk wearily three miles to her home.

From the City to the cottage was between three and four miles; and two hours after-

wards Lucy dragged her jaded limbs in-doors. Her little maid was the burden bearer, and consequently had been sent home by omnibus, while, as many a time before, her mistress walked all the way herself to save a fare.

CHAPTER VII.

It happened that the street-door was not fastened. So after slowly closing the front garden wicket-gate, Lucy walked wearily indoors. She went into the parlour, once so nicely furnished, now, alas! so scantily, and she threw herself into a chair to rest her aching limbs before changing her things. She took off her bonnet, and resting her arms on the table, laid her cheek upon them, thinking, thinking upon the same old subject—her absent husband!

What Mr. Masham had said about William had given her no encouragement, rather indeed the reverse; and she was oppressed with grief. Strange what ideas come into the head when one broods day after day upon the same subject. Was

William alive? If so, how was it there was no letter from him? Had he, as she had heard of men doing, given up his wife and children, and so got rid of all the grinding troubles concerning them? Perhaps he had; probably he had. And then the weary months of silence gone by were thought of, and the thing was settled—he had!

Oh! William, William, poor fellow! The trouble and burdens that she and the children had brought upon him were too much, too much to be borne; and he had been compelled to give up his family, compelled to forsake those he loved so well, driven to do supreme violence to his own heart. Poor William!

“Poor William!” though not “ungrateful,” not “traitorous William!” And the scenery of an unspeakably miserable life-drama passed duskily before her mind.

It was a fiercely hot London afternoon outside; the sunlight poured relentlessly and hotly down upon the red garden wall and the white gravelled pathways. The earth seemed to simmer in the heated air, and the roads to send up clouds of dusty smoke.

The long walk from the City had overcome her, and she sat there between sleeping and waking, just conscious. Conscious enough of being where she was, by no longer feeling the glaring sun shining on her aching head as it had been doing for four hours past, by hearing the rumble of the town omnibuses as they passed the gardens in front, by hearing the blue flies knock lazily against the window panes, and then buzz into silence in the darkened corners of the room. Conscious enough to dreamily contrast the misery of these very moments with the joy she should know again if he ever came back to her.

She was acting out all a slumberous little drama. William the hero, good, noble, loving, in grief, driven from her by Fate. She, the one in fault, if fault there were, she who took from him all the comforts and independence of a bachelor's life, and had only her poor love to offer him instead. Oh ! what he must have suffered before he had been driven to desert her thus—her and the children. She had taught the eldest to pray daily and nightly for his dear, good father who was so far away. Did the father

know that? Oh, yes, he must know it, as he must know of everything relating to her love for him. Aye, and therefore he must have suffered all the more in being compelled by despair to give her up. She could see the boy on his knees, hear his voice praying; and see her husband's pallid face with that sad and gloomy look upon it which she had known for the first time when he was on his sick-bed! She fell asleep, poor girl, in the midst of this terrible drama, mind and body wearied out. Slept thus with her cheek on her arms that drowsy summer afternoon, the table wet with her tears. Then——

“Oh, if you please, ma'am, the letter. Master's up-stairs with baby asleep, and I've been out for the groceries and left the door on the jar. Please, 'ma'am, master, baby's papa, has wrote from Australia, and master up-stairs has got the letter.”

Lucy started up, and rushed to the doorway half awake as she was.

“Oh! there now you've been and hit the nasty head with your poor door,” cried the hurried girl as her mistress struck her

face against the door-post, for she had risen to her feet before her sight had awoke.

But what did Lucy care for the blow? what did she care for the bleeding now as she started out of the room to see the evidence of her husband's love.

"Oh, papa, how could you, how could you have kept me so long without telling me?"

The letter was lying on her father's knees; but now she was reading it almost before she had done her complaining. She did not hear father say how, watching the child, he had dozed off this warm afternoon, and had not known of her coming in.

"But won't you read it out, my child?" he said eagerly, "and let me know how my boy is getting on."

Then Lucy read:—

"'I am now writing my third letter to you.'

"His third, papa dear. Fancy that!"

William had been to that ever memorable false diggings on the Fitzroy River, after coasting along in a half-decked boat nearly two thousand miles; and he gave the history

of that failure which had been already given in the English newspapers. Now he was back in Melbourne teaching in a school at a salary of two hundred a year. It was costing him, however, nearly all this to live, and yet he managed to send the enclosed bank draft. If his dear wife and father cared to come to him at once the money was enough to pay for steerage-passage. It would take a long time before he could send enough money to purchase saloon-passages. He well knew how hard a battle it would be for them to put up with all the troubles a life in the second cabin would entail; and he would leave it to themselves whether they thought they could go through with it.

"What a thing, papa, to say! Of course we can go through any troubles for a few months, only three or four."

And in Lucy's mind the thing is then and there settled. It is possible, though, that with all her eagerness to get to Australia, she would, had she known the trials inseparable from a second cabin, have shrunk from encountering them. But now in her innocence both she and father believed they

could cheerfully undergo them, and even worse ones. Ignorance has its timidity, but it has its bravery too.

The long letter was at last read, and the enclosure inspected. Then after a rest, the precious epistle is read again, and the children enthusiastically kissed, and told that they were soon going round the big world to see dear papa, never to be away from him more. There was no needlework done that evening; nothing but laughing and talking, talking and laughing—Lucy wild with joy. She was no longer the desponding anxious girl of the last two months. Happiness is a great doctor. At six o'clock that summer's evening when she, and father, and the children sat round the tea table, the very maid almost cried with grief because she too, was not going to Australia.

In the midst of that happy feast, the omnibus stopped, and Mr. Masham stepped out. Lucy had already told her father of her meeting him; and seeing that he knew so much of their affairs, and indeed that there was nothing to be ashamed of, he was invited in to tea, Lucy herself coming out to

the hall to make the friendly request. And walk in Mr. Masham did, without any hesitation, smiling and light hearted as you please. He at once recognised father.

"How do you do, Sir," he said heartily. "I am so very glad to see you all looking so cheerful and happy. Surely, Mrs. Chartres, you have heard some specially good news since I saw you. A letter from William?"

"Oh! Mr. Masham, yes; and it has put us all into such good spirits. He has sent for us; and we shall leave England in the very first ship that sails."

"Upon my word, Mrs. Chartres, I must congratulate you. He must be a very fortunate fellow to have made such a lot of cash as will pay your passages, in so short a time."

"This is what he has sent us, my dear sir," said father, showing the draft for forty pounds.

The young sailor's countenance fell, as he saw the amount.

"Of course you know, sir," he said, "that this will not pay for one passage by the saloon."

"I know that. But we can go in the second cabin," father explained.

"Yes, indeed," Lucy put in, "we can 'rough it' you know, Mr. Masham, as poor William had to do."

Ned Masham knew what the "roughing it" meant. But he was not the man to damp Lucy's enthusiasm. Though after a good deal of talk about it, he thought it best to show the thing in its real colours.

"There are many annoyances, Mr. Chartres, to put up with in a second cabin, annoyances which are specially hard for a lady to bear. And it is not considered a very respectab— aristocratic way, you know, of arriving in the colony."

"Oh, Mr. Masham, how absurd of us to talk of travelling aristocratically, or any other nice way," Lucy said, "please God we can cheerfully put up with every inconvenience so long as the ship carries us safely."

Father's very sensible statistical inquiry, "About what per centage of the colonists have reached Australia as saloon passengers?" educed the gratifying reply,

"I think, Sir, I can recollect reading in

a leading article in the *Sydney Herald*, that for every seventeen persons arriving in Australia from Europe, no fewer than sixteen have had assisted passages. And even that won't be your case, for though you go in the second cabin, your passage won't be paid by government."

Father laughed. "So you see, Lucy, we may comfort ourselves with the assurance that there is only about one paying gentleman or lady to sixteen or seventeen plebeian emigrants."

Here Mr. Masham laughed merrily, explaining himself thus,

"And yet, Sir, I never met a single individual in Sydney or Melbourne above the rank of a loafer, and he not a very proud one, who had not, by his own account, come from home in the chief cabin of a first class vessel. It is a colonial weakness so to aver."

"Doubtless, doubtless," chimed in the philosophic Chartres. "People are much the same all over the world, especially our female friends. How do they all arrive in the colony? By the overland route, of course

—a hundred and thirty guineas passage money?"

"No, Sir, not usually. They only come as their male friends do, in the saloons of expensive sailing vessels."

"O, very modest indeed. Isn't it, Lucy?"

"Papa, you are a great sinner. Mr. Masham, don't you mind him when he affects to laugh at women. He is the kindest, best-hearted—"

"Ah! Mrs. Chartres, it is not given to every man to have his relatives loveable," the young sailor sighed. And thereupon he suddenly changed the subject in spite of all father's good intentions as to paying his dear daughter a number of special compliments in his presence.

By ten o'clock, when Masham got into his omnibus he had talked for well nigh four hours, mostly about his friend William Chartres, and withal he had never vouchsafed one word about himself in any other capacity than that of a common sailor in the ship 'Lightfoot.'

The door closed behind him, and Lucy returned to father eager with remarks

concerning her visitor. But father had the first word.

“And what do you think of him, Lucy?”

“O, papa, I was just going to ask you that. I can’t understand him at all, and he to be only a common sailor.”

“He certainly expresses himself very well, my dear; and his voice does not sound at all vulgar.”

“And his appearance, papa! In fact everything about him forbids the belief that as a sailor he is in his proper station. Did you notice that Latin quotation when you and he were talking about necessity—how glibly he pronounced it. He certainly is a gentleman in disguise.”

And thereupon Lucy invested Mr. Edward Masham with a hundred superior attributes which neither she nor any other young woman would think of granting to any nobleman or gentleman out of disguise.

“I don’t know about the disguise, my love,” said father, smiling. “There doesn’t seem to me to be much disguise about him. He may or may not be the son of a gentleman in difficulties, or he may, or may not be

the son of a gentleman, and guilty of some offence for which he has been discarded by his family—though mind you, I do not think this last."

"O, papa, how can you?" Lucy asked reproachfully. "After what dear William says about him too!"

"How can I, my dear? But I don't, I say. I sincerely hope that in reality we shall find him to be what he appears now—that is a thoroughly good hearted gentlemanly young fellow. At present he certainly is rather a puzzle to us."

Ned Masham's ears ought to have tingled as he drove homeward in the omnibus that evening. But we don't think they did; or would have, even if he had heard Chartres' remarks. He had promised to call again the day but one after; and possibly he was making some internal arrangements about that visit. By the way, he had insisted on being allowed to carry the emigration business for Lucy and her father through, and the next day he went to the docks to inquire when the first Melbourne vessel sailed. Then he wrote to Chartres saying that a very

comfortable safe ship would sail in about a month's time.

"A month, papa dear," said Lucy with a great sigh, "a whole month. Willie and baby," turning to the children and addressing them, "before we go to dear papa."

CHAPTER VIII.

“A LIFE on the ocean wave,” like everything else has its variations. In a well-furnished saloon, with a comfortable state-room, plenty of fresh meat, tolerable liquors, and an easy-going dry ship it is generally comfortable enough—comfortable, indeed, beyond the usual expectations of the landsman. Among a not over cleanly crowd of peasants, however, packed in a large bare compartment, with food by no means enticing to anybody accustomed to the luxury of meat, and on the main deck of any merchant-vessel whatever, no voyage can be even tolerably pleasant, nor to a woman of refinement anything than exquisitely miserable.

Poor Lucy and Chartres soon found this out. They had, however, a good friend on

board, and this was no other than Mr. Edward Masham himself, bound again for Australia, now an officer of the ship *Planet*, through means best known to himself. He had promised that he would endeavour to get employment in the ship which carried his friends out to the colony, and he had been fortunate enough to get the berth of second mate.

Chartres' infirmity kept him from perceiving much of the misery surrounding him. He endeavoured to take things stoically, and ate and drank out of the tin platters and pannikins without repining over the want of clean crockery and sweet smelling napery ; sat him down and heard the unmeaning conversation of boors without grumbling, and altogether helped himself to just exist in the flesh until his four months' earthly purgatory should end. As for poor Lucy, she was bewildered at first, and cried, and rallied, and got ill, and rallied again for the dear children's sake, until custom had made just endurable what at first was simply horrible. And so the voyage went on.

August when they left England — the

height of rosy-lipped, large-eyed summer. Six weeks are passed, and the line is crossed. And now they are in the depth of blustering dark-eyed winter, wet and cold, though a thousand times preferable to the dreadful “doldrums.”

Many days were too rough for the ladies to go upon deck. To-day, however, it was fine, though wind and sea were rather high, and as the former was nearly on the quarter, that is very favourable, the good ship raced along with easy and pleasant motion. In those high latitudes, in mid-winter, the sun sets at four o’clock, and it was now nearly three, and the wind was rising as it often did by night, and the ship running faster than ever.

The cloudland was inexpressibly grand to see, black, yellow, and dark red over the lowering sun, and on the western horizon ; black, grey, and dull white overhead and to the north. To the south all was still, a pale blue ; but the stupendous cloud-masses were very rapidly aiding the night to cover it also with a dark veil. Fast as the goodly ark was running, the wind often whistled by her

in stiff blasts ; and the captain, coming on deck, gave his loud orders to take in sail and make all snug for the night. All the people whose lives depended upon this man's skill were still on the deck ; and the young men passengers cheerily helped the seamen to pull the ropes and clear the decks. Few of the non-workers were speaking, though all were active, listening and looking at sea and sky. This was one of those evenings at sea when a not very timid person can especially enjoy the comforts of a warm, well-lighted, cheerful cabin, by occasionally going out on the poop, and feeling and seeing the powers of the great elements whose buffets make one feel the more keenly the advantages of the interior ship. The racing speed of the vessel, the noise of the sea, the hubbub of the rising wind, and the grandeur of the setting sun surrounded by sublimest clouds, impressed every heart on board.

Crack—crack ! a shot. Two, just like a gun ! A staggering shake of the racing vessel ! There as the eyes of the frightened women followed the motion of the Captain's outstretched arm—there, close to the ship,

higher even than her poop deck, so close that an oar would reach them, were three men's faces and heads in the boiling surge.

The shriek that went up to heaven from the women on board was appalling. Lucy closed her eyes, clasped her arms round her two children and sank down crouching on the deck, hiding her face on her knees.

One of the yards had broken away, and three of the best men in the ship had been hurled into the waves.

Then ensued a noise and shouting among the male passengers indescribable. Nothing whatever was done by them to any good, though each ordered his neighbour to act. As to the women, all except two or three were dumb with horror; and the two or three exceptions shrieked wildly and detestably; Masham and his superior officer, Mr. Loudon, were on the poop in a moment. Each took out his knife as he ran aft; each cut the lashings of the two life-buoys that hung by the taffrail, and each flung his buoy right in front of the drowning men.

“Bravo, my lads!” shouted the Captain. The sailors cheered.

The bawling among the landsmen still continued. The Captain fortunately had his speaking-trumpet in his hand. He had just been using it to take in sail.

“Silence!” he roared in a voice of thunder.

He was obeyed by the men. The shrieking girls, however, went on worse than ever.

All this time the ship was coming round, for the helmsman had at once put the helm down.

“Throw those girls overboard,” roared the Captain.

“Aye, aye; over with them,” cried some one else. “We can do nothing with their horrid caterwaulings!”

The Captain and chief mate now ran to superintend the lowering of the boat. The screams of the women it was easy to see were bewildering both officers and men. Ned determined to have them silent at all hazards.

“Silence!” he bellowed into the ears of one of the screamers. But the reply was only a volley of shrieks.

“Well then, over you go!” he said, taking up the screamer in his arms. “Good bye, we must do it!” and down the poop ladder

he carried her, seeking, to all appearance a convenient aperture in the bulwarks through which to launch his burden into the sea. Not finding such, inasmuch as none existed, he carried the girl down below and there left her. By this time the other shrieking women were not only silent, but actually crouching down behind their companions to be out of sight. Ned, like every other man—especially sailors who comparatively seldom hear the female voice—could not bear to hear a woman's scream. It quite bewildered him, as it does many another man in the hour when he needs all his presence of mind. His little comedy it is seen was of no small benefit. Just as he returned to the poop the boat was launched. He asked for no orders, nor waited for any permission; but slid down the tackling and cast off.

"North west by north," shouted the Captain, "as near as possible. Look just under the sun—between you and it!" and with a hearty cheer away went the little speck upon the waters.

"Oh!" cried Lucy, in an agony of apprehension. "Why, why, are they going that

way when we left the poor fellows behind us! Tell them—tell them they are going wrong!" And she actually ran to the Captain, and catching his arm told him her fears.

"My dear Mrs. Chartres," the Captain said kindly, "we have turned the ship round, you know, and you may rest assured they are going direct to the poor fellows, and will save them if they can but see them. I hope those life-buoys are not shams though."

"Ah! Captain Markham, will they, can they be saved?" was the agonized question.

"My dear lady," said the kind sailor, "God grant they may! If the poor fellows can swim and have caught the life-buoys so cleverly thrown to them, there is every chance of their being alive now. Would to heaven we had but a couple of hours more daylight!"

The Captain all this time, even while talking, did not take his eyes off the boat, now diminished to a grey speck, and only now and then to be distinguished from the white waves which broke in myriads round it. The wind was still steadily increasing;

and now because of the vessel's standing still, it whistled with great force against the rigging. The sea was rising too, and worse than all, the sun now behind a great bank of clouds was just on the horizon. Every one's eyes were on the grey speck afar off.

"I can see her now." "I saw her just then." "She was on the top of that wave." "She's gone!" "She's upset!" "Good heavens!" "God help them!" These were the cries of the passengers. They had lost sight of the white boat amidst the white waves before the sailors had.

At length only the few seamen who had telescopes could see the boat. It was quite dusk now.

"I didn't see her rise out of the trough of that sea, Sir," called out Mr. Loudon, his glass to his eye.

"Yes—yes; thank God! there she is!" the Captain cried.

"Sure, Sir? I can't see her. No; they're swamped!"

"Good God! I thought it was the boat—only a wave! God help them, poor fellows!" cried the Captain.

All those who had telescopes now joined in, "She never rose from that trough."

"Poor Masham," said Loudon, in a trembling voice. And the lookers on now no longer peered anxiously out to sea, but closed in anxiously together, and pale and heart-sick conversed in whispers. Nothing could be done, or next to nothing, now night was on them, to save the brave fellows if their boat was really swamped.

Here was a second and worse catastrophe which paralysed for a moment even the officers and seamen. The cry went through the ship that the boat was lost sight of, and the two distracted ladies with most of the other women set to weeping bitterly. Still all hope for the boat was not quite extinguished. She was painted a dull white, which made her hard to be distinguished from the myriad wave crests which showed all round the horizon. Before they lost her entirely, they had all of them twice missed her for a minute or so. And there was some faint hope that she really might not be swamped.

The vessel lay to, and the sun had gone

down, alas, but too quickly ; and now all was doubt, and sorrow, and darkness. There was nothing spoken and thought about but the fate of the brave crew of the boat ; the three poor fellows who had first fallen overboard were now hardly remembered ; the evening meal of the hundred and more persons on board remained unserved and unasked for. And thus the time passed until it was nearly eight o'clock.

The Captain acted nobly. His ship was a clipper ; and like all other masters of fast-sailing boats his chief aim in this world was to make the quickest run of a season. Now as far as could be seen up to the day of the accident he might possibly have made the brilliant run of the season, seeing that his vessel had come to where she now was in an almost unexampled short time. The wind was favourable, a twelve knot breeze flying past, and yet he, without hesitation, gave up all hope of accomplishing the desire of his heart, and set himself to save human life.

It was now pitchy dark ; and at length the sobbing women were persuaded to go below. The men all stayed on deck talking

in whispers. The Captain now called a council—the first and third officers, the doctor, boatswain and three or four of the most intelligent among the passengers. They sadly debated the chances for and against the boat's being afloat still. If so would she be able to outlive the night—could her crew outlive it? What was in the boat? Some mattresses by chance; and better still five or six rugs hastily thrown in. Good. A compass? Yes, Mr. Loudon had himself handed one to Masham. Then they would lay to all night; and every fifteen minutes fire rockets and burn blue-lights. If Mr. Masham be alive and see one of them, then they are saved.

"But," said Loudon sadly, "I am absolutely certain that the boat never rose out of that trough. I would swear it."

"God help them! but let us do our duty, Mr. Loudon, and then we shall have no reason to reproach ourselves hereafter," the Captain said firmly.

And the good ship lay to all that long and inexpressibly anxious night. She tossed and rolled on the waters, every timber creaking

with the strain. The men never went to sleep, not one of them ; and every now and then a few half-dressed frightened women would creep out and along the deck under the shelter of the bulwarks to ask anxious questions, and to see the fizzing rockets ascend and explode in the dark sky far away to leeward. The wind whistled, and the waters roared and sounded and appeared more awful than in the darkness itself when the blue-lights were burning. The ship with her bellying sails and creaking masts would be for a minute or two the exact centre of a sphere of pallid light. Beyond the light all was inky blackness, as clearly defined as if the rays were covered in by a dome of black crape, the sea for its base.

At four o'clock the sun had gone down. Now it was more than seven hours later—past twelve o'clock, midnight. A blue light had just been burned, a rocket was falling far off to leeward. The Captain had gone below and thrown himself on a seat in the warm saloon to endeavour to snatch an hour's sleep, for he had not had much rest for three nights past. The chief officer,

the third mate and six of the men were on the poop. And there too, shivering in their cloaks and shawls, stood several of the women.

"Ah! there it comes, a chance for the poor fellows in the boat, if they are still alive," said the third mate, holding up his face to the rain.

Everybody spoke with abated breath.

"Aye, poor fellows, if the drizzle comes into rain the wind is sure to fall a bit," said Mr. Loudon."

"Drizzle nor rain won't do them much good, Sir, I'm thinking," said the boatswain, "for I see the boat swamp with my own eyes."

A light rainfall had come on, and as it continued, the wind—which was against the boat's return—rapidly fell.

Here there was something new to take the watchers' attention.

"My!" remarked one of the women; "just look around and see how all the waves is afire!" And so indeed they seemed. Either the usual phosphorescence had by accident begun to play in that spot, or the vessel had

drifted into a warm current. This last was the opinion of the seamen.

“She’s drifting a bit!” the chief officer said to the helmsman.

“Aye, aye, Sir; so she is.” And then there was silence again—silence greater than before too; for the wind now no longer whistled and moaned through the rigging.

“Time to light up again, Sir. Jim, the light—are you——?”

“Hark!” one of the affrighted women cried; and violently clutching the last speaker’s arm, she spasmodically stretched out her hand and pointed out into the darkness.

“What the dickens, Mrs. Clare! what are you up to?” asked the pinched sailor, rubbing his arm.

But now the voice of the man at the wheel is heard “Did you hear that, Sir?”

No one made any answer. Each stood with outstretched neck, and was silent.

“We’re hailed! yes, by heaven! Hark again—there!” And then officers and men ran to the side whence the sound came.

“Light up, men!” shouted the chief mate

in a voice of thunder. "Send up two rockets, Jim, one after the other!"

And just as the "aye, aye, sir," from the sailor died away, a faint but distinct call was heard by everybody. It was far away, out in the night among the shining waters. Yet there was no mistaking it. The landsmen heard it audibly; the seamen distinctly.

Up went one hissing rocket, then another; and then a dead silence. Every ear was painfully alive.

A moment afterwards the sparks of the last rocket had died away—and the faint hail came again. There were no words to be distinguished; but not a soul doubted that it was a weak human voice near, or a stronger one far away in the distance.

Twenty and more persons were on the poop by this time, and fifty and more on the forecastle.

The cry was heard again—heard by all. A tremendous cheer burst out. The women wept and wrung their hands with emotion. Men shouted to one another and thanked God. All those below rushed wildly on deck; and the Captain had much to do to command silence.

What was the hail from? Was it from the men in the boat; or could it possibly be from one of the men still alive on a life-buoy? Was it from the boat's crew clinging to the sides of their swamped vessel?

The officers simultaneously hailed. Everybody listened. No answer. A blue light—two together, blazed up and—

“There it is again!” On the other side of the ship though.

“They have drifted past us in the dark;” was the cry.

Again a blue light; and again the voice. This time apparently under the very bows.

The Captain rushed forward—speaking-trumpet in hand.

“Boat a-hoy—oy—oy”

No reply.

“Send up another rocket, Mr. Loudon.”

“Boat a-hoy—oy—oy!”

This time a faint shrill gargling hail—from the stern of the ship though

“My God—there's several of them!”

“Clear away the boat, men!” And a hundred eager hands flew to the work.

“Mr. Loudon, burn half-a-dozen blue

lights, one after the other, and keep a sharp look out!"

"Aye, aye, Sir."

No pen can describe the excitement. Even men wept!

The blaze of light now continued without intermission, and the boat was ready for lowering. In the midst, the cry, scream, or whatever it might be called, was heard twice repeated—directly overhead—and everybody started and looked up. The pious Catholics crossed themselves, and——then——

Down tumbled an enormous white sea bird, fluttering on the very heads of the men standing under the main-sail! Above, in the weird blue-lighted air, wheeled five or six others, uttering the very same cries which had raised so many cruelly false hopes.

The disappointment was fearful. At another time the thing would have been ludicrous. But no one laughed now.

"The lights have roused them, poor things," said the Captain sadly, as he walked aft.

But for all this disappointment the lights and rockets were burnt as before; and the

look-out was vigilantly kept until sunrise. After daylight, the vessel cruised round in a circle having a radius of ten or twelve miles. At noon she was put on her course.

There were very few on board that ship who didn't regret the loss of poor Ned Masham. He had always been such a kindly light-hearted fellow, that he was a universal favourite. There was ever a smile on his face, and he was seldom without a pleasant word for the women, young and old. There was one thing about him specially remarkable inasmuch as he was a sailor—he was never coarse ; he never cursed and swore as ninety-nine sailors in a hundred do ; and yet the men under him invariably obeyed him with as much alacrity as they did the first officer or the Captain himself. As to Lucy and her father, they really grieved bitterly for him. Short a time as they had known him, he had become almost as one of themselves. There had been but the one drawback against him, and that existed in father's mind only—the fact that he had never said a word about his antecedents. Poor Ned ! He had a great many friends !

The day after his being lost the third mate took his place ; and now the vessel being so short-handed, on account of the loss of so many men, some of the passengers were persuaded to join the ship as helpers. The kind-hearted Captain was terribly anxious about his ship being so short handed. His anxiety had made him an altered man by the time he had got to harbour with his charge of human lives.

Now the vessel, being so in want of hands, could not possibly venture to carry much sail, and therefore the latter part of the voyage was very long. At length the well-known light was sighted ; the pilot came off, and the following conversation ensued :

“ Well, Captain, you’re a good bit behind time this trip. But the loss of Mr. Masham and the men must have left you very short-handed !”

“ How in the world did you hear of the accident, pilot ?” inquired the astounded Captain.

“ Why, they’re here, Sir—at least Mr. Masham and his crew,” said the pilot, raising his voice so as to be heard by all the

by-standers, who were regarding him doubtfully as if he were a native black, and inspecting him minutely as a *quasi* foreigner.

The effect of his words may be imagined ! The cry “Mr. Masham’s here—in Melbourne !” was carried all throughout the vessel, before the pilot had finished his pause of importance.

“ Why yes, Sir. They came in an American barque, more than a week ago. Everybody is talking about the surprise it must be to you all to hear it.”

“ God only knows how rejoiced I am.”

“ I’m sure of that, Sir. But—” and the speaker paused, “ the papers is terribly down on you about it ; they’re kicking up all sorts of *ruxions*. ”

“ Why, why ? ”

“ Though Mr. Masham himself doesn’t blame you. He stands up on your side through thick and thin.”

“ But what in heaven’s name, pilot, are they saying against me ? ”

The Captain might well anxiously ask this ; for even a very slight report against a master’s efficiency or character will, in a

colony, send him home again passenger-less and cargo-less. He is a ruined man, then ; for none of the English merchants will employ him.

“ There is to-day’s paper, Sir—one of them. They accuse you of having sailed away from the boat—or at least of not waiting long enough for her to get back to you, and you knew how high the wind was, and that it was right in their teeth coming back to the ship. When they got to the spot where they believed the men fell over-board they could only just see the topmasts of the vessel ; and when the sun set they of course lost her altogether.”

Such was the substance of the report given to the public by one or two of the seamen who had been in the boat. Masham, indeed, had stoutly asserted that he knew the Captain could explain away all apparent faults, and he was right. The fact was that directly night came on, and the vessel could no longer be seen, Masham, who knew his own exact position from that day’s reckoning, had stepped an oar for a mast, made a sail of one of the rugs, and turned the

boat's head towards the island of Tristan d'Acunha distant only a hundred and twenty miles. The breeze was strong and favourable, and away they ran all night, half his men asleep and well-covered in by the benignant rugs and mattresses, and he steering. Surely enough Ned Masham had done a safe thing, for at noon next day he sighted his island, and the American barque too which took him and his crew on board.

Truth is not more strange than fiction, but it is often at least quite as curious as most reasonable imaginings. If any one doubts the episode of the boat, let him here be assured that what has been related above really happened, and that most persons in Victoria can guarantee the accuracy of this short account.

CHAPTER IX.

AUSTRALIA at last. Hobson's Bay. Melbourne, the city of gold! How the hearts of the voyagers throbbed with emotion as boat after boat of gay, well-clad people came on board to welcome their friends. The colonists were decked out in all the glory of French silks and Indian muslins, dead gold jewelry, and kid gloves, while their brothers, sisters, and parents, still in their peasant clothing, were almost afraid to set themselves on an equality with such well-dressed gentlemen and ladies. Yes, here, even before they landed the new comers saw the success —saw it personified, and rejoiced accordingly.

Oddly enough though there is always one feeling inseparable from the passenger's mind

on landing, namely, regret at leaving the good old ship. It is impossible not to feel it. One is leaving for ever the ark which has so safely carried one half round the world, in which one has lived happily and free from care for so many months past, that it seems an age. Many pleasant associations are connected with the voyage, and now these are all broken in upon. One is leaving a home—a place where no care dwelt, where no thought for the morrow's necessities was felt—to begin life anew, in a strange land and among strange people. It is impossible to help feeling regret, and one finds it much the keener if one has no friends in the new country to welcome him. However, it did not cost father and Lucy many sighs to reach the land once again.

The vessel arrived at the pier, and now came the great excitement of landing. Scores of friends and relatives boarded the ship and took away their joyous companions. By the time all was ready to start by train nearly every new arrival had a colonial friend by his side. The three or four who had not looked comparatively lonely and gloomy.

Lucy was very anxious. Why had not William come for her?

They left their address on board, and went with some few other parties to a quiet hotel in Melbourne. Here they remained all that day and night, and by noon next day they saw with anxiety nearly all their companions called for by relatives, who—some of them—dashed up to the hotel in their own neat carriages adorned by coachmen and footmen.

What poor Lucy suffered that day was really terrible. Every horrible fancy concerning her husband entered her brain. Was he dead? Had he regretted sending for her? The tales of colonial doings, which were told among the passengers coming out, had shocked her. Had William married again? Was he ill—lying on a bed of suffering? Had he, since sending for her changed his mind and gone away to some other colony? These were the kind of questions she tortured herself with!

It was now three o'clock and she sat wearily looking out of the window, too much absorbed even to heed the children's

repeated questions, “Why doesn’t dear papa come for us?” The landlady of the hotel pitied and consoled her, telling her how the colony was not like England, how her husband might be up the country and not be able to learn the ship’s arrival for days to come. Her case was not altogether an unusual one, and she shouldn’t grieve so much. At length at about half past four o’clock, the good landlady came upstairs smiling, and called Mrs. Chartres’ name, whereat Mrs. Chartres’ heart gave a great bound and she stood up.

“He is come!” said the good matron, with a knowing smile, “I am sure he ought to be glad to see you!”

“I’ll mind the children,” offered one of the girls in the room. She and two or three other passengers were staying at this hotel.

Lucy followed the landlady down stairs, and the latter pushing open the door of the room, said—

“Mr. Chartres is here, ma’am.”

CHAPTER X.

IT was a long room with windows at the further end, and Lucy stood at the door, her hand pressed to her bosom, and her eyes dim with agitation—agitation so great that for a moment she avoided looking round her. She saw her husband—how could she mistake that well-known figure? — standing looking out of the window. The fact is that he was agitated too, as any man would be in his circumstances, so he had set himself to the not uncommon task of looking out into the road and at the passers-by, to steady his thoughts, and the room being so large he heard neither the opening of the door nor his dear wife's footfalls.

Great love has great fears; and Lucy actually stood still by the doorway afraid to advance towards her husband. Again

arose the old thought of the last few days, because he hadn't come for her directly the ship arrived. "Perhaps he doesn't care so much for me now, and is sorry I am here," and she felt her limbs tremble as if she must sink down on the floor. She thought how many women worthy of admiration had he seen since he parted from her; "Some," said her humility, "prettier, better, who would have been more useful to him than I." All this passed through her mind in less time than a few words could be written. And still she stood and looked at her own dear husband. He moved a little, turned his head in the direction of something passing outside; and she caught, through her eyes, flowing over with tears of mingled sweetness and sorrow, a glimpse of his features. Then the impulse to fly to his arms rushed upon her, and she made one step towards him. Then—"I will wait," she thought, "till he turns and sees me."

He sighed; no uncommon thing for him to do in the old days, and the charm of silence and reticence was broken. "William, my own dear, dear husband!" she exclaimed,

and she walked quickly towards him, her eyes immovably fixed on his face, and seeming, by mechanical movement, to avoid the furniture in her way, for she never looked down. Her husband heard the voice, turned round, and all the old joy and peace came again as he reached her in a stride, and took her passionately in his arms.

“Oh! my wife, I hardly expected you would make such a sacrifice as this, even for me” he murmured, as she stood, her cheek against his.

“Sacrifice? what, William—what sacrifice?” she whispered.

“Coming out as you did. What you and dear father must have suffered! It must have been fearful!”

“Anything; anything for this moment, my husband!”

“I can guess what you have gone through, my darling girl. I can never repay your love. It was all my selfishness to have you near me, that made me hasten your coming to me, even though your voyage should be miserable.”

“My wicked husband is sorry now that

he was in such a hurry to send for his wife. She will go away back ;” with a smile and a frown, and a closer cling to his bosom at the bare idea of another parting.

“ My wicked wife is a dreadful being, even to think of such a thing in jest.”

“ Then never let my darling husband imagine that any sufferings, which brought me to him, would be too great to endure, so long as they would let me live through them to reach him.”

Their hearts were too full to say much more. What they did say was uttered, as it were, in a delicious dream ; and with another fond embrace Lucy went up for the children, and William got the luggage on to the car, upon which his father—whom he had already seen—was seated. The joyful children came ; and the eldest knew dear papa directly, and ran to his arms to be kissed. The second little one followed suit ; and said, “ Oh papa !” and mechanically repeated in triumph in his arms part of his daily prayer “ God bless dear good pa, and make me a good boy ;” prayers taught in far-off England by a fond mother ; words which never a night

and morning had passed without hearing it repeated by children's innocent lips.

So while her husband got the luggage on the car, Lucy ran up-stairs to send down the children, and to put the last finishing touches to her dress. Since getting up in the early morning she had been—all but bonnet and mantle—dressed to leave; and now when she came down from her bedroom with the children's hats in her hands, dressed for outdoors, her eyes sparkling, and her lovely childlike face rosy and beaming with happiness, she looked what she had during the voyage purposely avoided appearing—every inch the well-bred beauty. The best of her late companions now no longer addressed her on terms of equality—indeed that had never quite been done; and when she wished the friendly landlady “good-bye,” and shook her hand, the latter said heartily “Good-bye, ma'am; you ought to be a happy lady.”

“So I am now, Mrs. Clift;” and the happy lady went.

“So she deserves to be,” said one of her late companions; “me and her was always great friends on board.”

"So she ought to be," said another ; "God bless her pretty face ! She isn't like some people I know, sticking herself up with *hairs*, and she a born lady, too, that has a right to if she likes."

And the lady claiming Lucy's intimate acquaintance at once subsided.

Into the crowded streets, through Melbourne, to their new home at Richmond. Father sat in front of the car, taking care of the eldest boy, and discussing with him the wonders of the Australian city. The two children were accustomed, when with grand-papa, always to tell aloud for his behoof all they saw. Chartres and his wife sat with the other child behind. Lucy's right hand held her husband's ; held it, first because she loved him, and secondly, because, in order to keep on one of those abominable vehicles known as Melbourne cars, a woman must clasp and cling—pretty tightly too—to something or another. Men—except very little ones—manage to place their feet against the back rail of the foot-board, and so keep themselves from being unceremoniously flung out into the street ; but women and children on

the back seats have, in order to reach their destination, to hold hard ; and woe be to the unfortunate individual who, for a moment, especially at starting, omits this precaution. We have known at least twenty individuals saved by fellow-passengers from serious falls ; and on two occasions we saw persons flung on their faces clean into the road.

“Don’t think me selfish, William dear !” said Lucy ; “but I fretted so much yesterday and this morning, when I saw all the other passengers called for by their friends.”

“I never heard of your arrival,” said William, “until I read it in this morning’s paper ; and that I didn’t see until past two o’clock in the afternoon. The fact is, I went out of town yesterday ; and this morning I didn’t get up until it was just time to run off to the college ; so I had no opportunity of seeing the paper until the afternoon recess. Then I hurried to my landlady to tell her you were come, and from home I came post haste to you.”

The new colonists wondered—as all new colonists do—at the magnificence of a city which, but a few years before was a village,

and at the every day dress of people whom they had, up to forty-eight hours ago, imagined to be attired in all the glories of red shirts and bowie-knives.

“Why, it’s just like London, William ; and anything like the women’s dresses I never saw ! Everyone seems to me to be well off here.”

“Yes, Lucy ; there is plenty of money flying about,” William Chartres remarked with a sigh and a curious expression on his face, which the watchful wife had already once noticed. “Perhaps we may catch some of it one of these days, who knows ?”

“Please God, William dear, I’ll work so hard with you and try. But just notice those two ladies—they look like mother and daughter—on the cab behind us. Why, those dresses and real lace mantles must be worth more than a hundred guineas. Who can they be—some noblewomen ?”

Chartres laughed, and what he had seldom, if ever, done in England when talking with his wife—sneered. “There are no noblewomen or men out here, Lucy, but very, very few gentlemen and fewer ladies still.

You must never here take the book by its cover." He turned to the carman. "Who are those two ladies on the car behind us?"

"Them, Sir? They live near me at Richmond. It's the landlady of the 'Earl of Raleigh' and her daughter, nigh hand where we're going."

"So much for dress, Lucy, in the colony. Would my wife like to spend so much as those publicans and sinners on her adornments?" Again a shade over his face, only momentarily though, and then not when his eyes were looking into his wife's. He felt his hand pressed, and looked into the sweet innocent face that seemed to deprecate his thought.

"Have I vexed you, William dear?" in a whisper.

"You foolish girl." And his look now was so different.

"I shall never care to dress that way, except my husband wishes it. But I shall soon begin to try and earn enough money to help my poor William to support so many of us, and to become independent."

It was his turn now to press the hand in

his. "Pooh ! nonsense ; don't you think I'm going to remain long poor. I intend in three or four years to be a wealthy man and go back to England." But Chartres' face was far from expressing the hopes his words did. Why should he mar the pleasures of to-day ?

"Which house, Sir ?" asked the carman.

"There, that cottage on the right, the one with the green verandah."

And when they drove up, Chartres' landlady, a kind portly woman, came out to shake hands with her lodger's long talked of wife, and carry in the youngest boy.

Mrs. Crowley was the landlady's name. Her husband who was a substantial house-owner with an income of about twenty pounds a week from places partly built with his own and his son's hands, was a great friend of Chartres. Their youngest child at home, a boy of ten, was a pupil at the college in which William was professor, and he being vastly fond of his teacher, his parents followed suit. Chartres had, ever since his arrival from the unfortunate diggings, lived in the same house, and thus had he and

these homely people become more than mere acquaintances. For the last month or more Mrs. Crowley used almost daily to express her anxiety for the safe arrival of the good lady, her lodger's wife. It was no secret to her that the said good lady was—at all events by her husband—considered to be the loveliest of women. True, the photograph did not at all prove its original to be anything like what she really was; so Mrs. Crowley, heretofore, could not bring herself to understand why her lodger should go into raptures over it. She saw the reason though the moment her eyes fell upon Lucy. She stood still—as Chartres noticed, and as he was well accustomed to see other men and women do—at the sight of such peculiar loveliness and innocent grace.

"Well, Mrs. Crowley," said William with a sly look, "I've brought her to you at last. What do you think of her, eh?" This was after everybody had been transferred indoors.

"Ah, you sly rogue, Mr. Chartres," this was not said in Lucy's hearing. "Wherever did you get her? I never see anything like her before."

"Pooh, she's nothing!"

"Nothing?" and the heavy matron turned full round to give an indignant denial to that assertion. "You may well be as proud a man as, as—but, there, you're only laughing at me. My! won't Crowley be surprised when he comes home."

"I shall be jealous of him if he doesn't look out."

"Oh! yes; go on, Sir. This is one of your impudent days, and well it may be. I'm going in now to see what the sweet lady may want."

Father and William with the two boys walked about the trim little garden while the women were arranging matters within. They talked about the voyage, and the colony, and William's prospects for an hour or so, and then the women came out to them. Mrs. Crowley was a perfect avalanche of gracious nods, smirks and smiles. Women positively seem to enjoy as much as men do the companionship of the lovely and innocent of their own sex. They all walked about the shady paths, chatting; and it was agreed that as it was then the last night of a cele-

brated actor's appearance in Melbourne, Lucy should see him.

"And you'll come too, Mrs. Crowley?" Chartres gallantly said.

"That I won't, Sir. I'm sure your good lady here would only wish me far enough."

"Oh! no indeed, Mrs. Crowley," Lucy said, "why should you think that?"

The elderly lady sighed a sigh of wisdom, and then immediately after smiled a smile of slyness, saying "Go together the two of you, I care nought for your theaytres."

Then came the dissipation of an early tea; tea while the sun was shining hot and bright overhead. Lucy, father, and the children were in ecstacies. Everything to them looked so neat, so nice and tempting after the long sea voyage, the very smell of the earth seemed to bring contentment with it.

The room was deep in the shade of a verandah covered with jasmine and roses. Things looked to the voyagers after their rough life on shipboard, like a scene in a play.

They were astonished, as indeed most English people would be at the substantiality of an Australian tea. One end of the

table was covered by a white cloth, and upon it was laid a great fillet of veal and a ham. Then there were, besides delicious tea, lettuces, radishes, water melons, and rock melons, not forgetting some oranges, and a nice hot plum pie for the children. There was cake, too, real sweet plum cake for them. The good-natured hostess took the children and the meat in hand while Lucy poured out the tea, and they were all as happy as such a joyful occasion could make them. Six o'clock struck ; and punctually Mr. Crowley came home ; went—after a few whispered words with his boy, who opened the door for him—to his bedroom, and in a few minutes afterwards appeared before the company.

Mr. Crowley was a good specimen of a colonial, hard-working, independent man. He was middle-sized and fair, with fawn-coloured hair, impossible to be turned grey, cadaverous face, with red streaks on his cheeks like those on an apple ; large, thin-lipped, elastic mouth, and grey twinkling eyes. He had evidently been born a taciturn man ; and would, to the day of his death, have assuredly

remained so, had he lived and died in the land of his nativity—England. However, he had come to the colony twenty-six years before ; and the colony had made him a talkative man. Still, however, nature kept him a shy one. He was a curious combination. Nature and habit were accustomed to be perpetually skirmishing in every one of his conversations.

“ Now, Crowley,” said his good lady, “ come and sit you down and have tea with Mrs. Chartres. You see all our expected visitors have come.”

Chartres stood up and took Crowley by the arm. “ Let me introduce you to my wife—Mr. Crowley, Mrs. Chartres ;” and Mr. Crowley gave a short nod, and then a cough, and stared in undisguised wonder at his new acquaintance, standing stock still just inside the open door.

Lucy was no stranger to the humble, hand-shaking method of introduction, and she rose and held her hand out to Mr. Crowley.

“ Come, man ;” and Chartres gave his shoulder a friendly twinge, “ won’t you shake hands with my wife ?”

This at length Mr. Crowley did.

"Ha—ha—ha," laughed the stout hostess in great glee ; laughed a laugh of sheer heartiness at her husband ; and what is more, made no secret of it to him. "Well now, you are surprised, Crowley. So was I too, I tell you," and Lucy, who feared the worst, blushed tremendously.

Mr. Crowley gave a twinkling look at his better half and spoke—

"I am. No mistake, old lady!" and the visitors—children and all—fairly started ; started at his voice. Such a voice! Even experienced father had never heard anything like it ! Cracked, dissonant, mixed in petto and in falsetto, rumbling, rauque ; no second human being could have produced it.

Mr. Crowley had been a sailor, a tin miner, a soldier, a stone-mason (his father's trade) in England. Then he came to Australia as warder of prisoners to Hobart-town ; he afterwards became a policeman (mounted trooper), and when the diggings broke out turned into a gold digger, then a shepherd, then a ferryman, then a bullock-drayman, then a cabman, and finally a stone-mason again in Mel-

bourne. He now worked steadily at his trade, wages were high, saved, for the first time in his life, purchased an allotment of land at Richmond, put up, with his eldest son's help, (his eldest son was now an attorney in good practice in Melbourne), a cottage. Then repeated this feat about once every two years or so, until finally he became owner of many good stone and brick buildings, which now brought him in his income of nearly twenty pounds a week. And thus our friend became independent.

Mr. Crowley now walked slowly to the table and sat down thereat.

“My, Mark ! you are in a maze !” his wife laughed. “Do you know what? I told Mr. Chartres you would be so; and he said he'd only have to grow jealous of you !”

Mr. Crowley's eyes twinkled, and the streaks on his face showed redder through the bronze as he looked at his wife. He suddenly reached out his hand—across meat, salad and pie—to William. “Give me your hand, lad,” and having received the hand, he shook it slowly, and with clocklike regularity. He kept his head though turned towards

his left shoulder, and never took his twinkling eyes off the young wife's delicious blushing face. "What I say I means, and what I means I say!" he said solemnly. "But," and he brightened and talked in his other (colonial) quick manner. "I've seen nothing like her, Sir ; and what's more, I don't believe—I'll bet fifty pound, and stake the money there and then ;" looking round, as if to find some convenient friend ready to enact the part of stake-holder ; "fifty notes," he repeated emphatically, "that no man has ever seen such a lady as your good lady in any of the Australian colonies."

Poor Lucy blushed more than ever. How could she help it ; indeed, she was half afraid.

"I'm sure Mr. Crowley, I'm much obliged for the compliment," Chartres stammered, rather put out by this sort of thing.

Mr. Crowley didn't appear to hear ; he still kept hold of Chartres' hand ; still kept on shaking it thoughtfully and regularly ; still kept his eyes fixed on the lovely young matron's glowing face ; then in a final burst he exclaimed, "God bless you! God bless

you both, ma'am, and the beautiful children!" Then he settled himself comfortably to his tea.

"And now, Mark, you've done paying compliments that's not wanted, go on with your tea, and let us get on with ours, for they're going to the theatre to-night."

And Mark faithfully did his wife's bidding.

"Come, father; it's time to get ready;" William said, standing up.

"My dear boy, you never imagined that I was going with you?" said father.

"Indeed I did, Sir; and Lucy thinks you are."

"No, my boy; I would really prefer staying at home. I shall remain and see after the children, and have a cigar in the garden with Mr. Crowley."

"I'm sure, Sir, I shall be much honoured by your valuable company," said Mr. Crowley, with his mouth very full.

The three men were now together, the others having left the room to get ready. Chartres went with the intelligence to his wife that father was not to go with them. He knocked at her room door; it opened, and

his wife stood there ready dressed ; stood there, blushing and looking more like the bride of a week than the wife of several years. She stood before her admiring husband an epitome of what England could produce in quiet fashion and beauty. Her childlike face was flushed with excitement, and her large grey eyes sparkled with love ; and Chartres felt that he ought to be grateful to heaven for having such a wife. Mrs. Crowley stood behind her charge, rubbing her hands and fairly bursting with admiration.

“ Do you know, Sir, I think she has grown more pretty than ever since she came in. She’s so glad I’m sure to be with you again.”

“ You’re complimentary this evening, Mrs. Crowley,” said Chartres.

“ There ! get you gone the two of you about your business, or you’ll be late. You’re just well matched. That’s all the praise I’ll give him, ma’am, and I’m sure it’s more than he deserves.”

And husband and wife went away to the starting place of the Melbourne cars.

The children, under the kindly care of Mrs. Crowley, went out playing in the

garden with the toys which papa had so thoughtfully bought for them, perhaps a month ago, when they were somewhere in the Indian Ocean. Father and Mr. Crowley adjourned to the summer-house, there to discuss affairs in general, and to smoke their pipes in particular. And so the sun went down, and William and his wife arrived at the theatre.

CHAPTER XI.

COLONIAL, that is Australian, theatres are somewhat peculiar. In Sydney and Melbourne no female of respectability can go to the undress circle, inasmuch as other females far from respectable affect these sittings. The regulations, therefore, about costume are very properly not very stringent, and a lady and gentleman may go to the dress boxes in any dress so long as they do not wear their bonnet or hat. Chartres had on his frock-coat, the very coat—as his wife perceived the moment she saw it—which he had brought from England, grey tweed waist-coat and trousers. His wife emerged from the dressing-room minus her jacket and bonnet, and wearing one of the neatest little opera-cloaks in the world, white, and trimmed with the new green.

"You adorable, sweet little creature!" whispered the admiring husband, as they walked up the corridor, "how did you manage to buy so many beautiful things. Did you find a purse full of five-pound notes before you sailed?"

Lucy laughed her short sweet laugh of female triumph. "Wait, my lord, I'll tell you all about them by-and-by. In the meantime let us try and think that what clothes I have on are really expensive, that they are worth hundreds of pounds. It is so nice, darling, in the theatre, you know, to imagine one's self wealthy and beautiful, and famous, and all that kind of thing," and she pressed her husband's arm.

There was no answering pressure though, and she looked anxiously up at her husband's face. There was that look again. He smiled the moment he caught her glance, but not in time. She saw the look plainly, and her heart sank within her.

"We too shall be rich and famous, my own," he whispered, smiling. "Wait a while, Lucy dearest. You will see we shall." A hopeful word from him made her happy

again, then at all events ; and the anxious look passed away from her sweet face. William's words were only words, but she thought they were from his heart.

Box-keepers are often not particularly attentive in any part of the world, least of all in Australia ; and the couple stood a moment, Chartres a step or two in advance, looking along those rows of seats which were as yet unoccupied and endeavouring to see one which had no "engaged" ticket attached.

"By all that's lovely!" Chartres heard a voice whisper in front ; whisper in a surprised and very audible way to a lady who sat near the speaker. "By all that's lovely, Annie, did you—who is that beautiful girl behind us?"

The speaker was perhaps as fine looking a man as the object of his admiration was a woman. He had every external attribute which makes a man attractive. He was tall, filled out, matured, straight-nosed, dark-haired, full-eyed and well bearded. His legs were long, his hands and feet small,

and his head well shaped. His face was happy—too happy-looking.

The lady addressed did not even so much as turn her head towards the ardent speaker ; and Chartres noticed the fact, and laughed to himself. He immediately thought he recognised the couple, and he was not left long in doubt ; for, as he turned to go back to his wife he felt something strike him on the back, and turned round in no very gentle manner, as may be imagined.

“ Bring them here, Chartres,” said the thrower, in a frantic whisper, and gesticulating to attract the attention of William to his missile—a pair of gloves tightly rolled up—“ there, there, beside you !”

And Chartres could do no less than he was bidden. He went to speak to his friends. They were Mr. and Mrs. Short ; he, the second master in William’s college (for being which he received six hundred pounds a year), and his wife one of the belles of Melbourne.

Mrs. Short was usually gracious enough to Chartres. Just now though, and because of a woman’s one, all-perceptive glance

round, she was not; for she could not forgive him for having such a wife as stood a few yards behind her. There was no time, however, at that moment for passage of arms. Short pervaded and overwhelmed everything in his enthusiasm.

“By the Lord Harry, Chartres! to think that you—Go, why the deuce don’t you? Go and bring her here at once!”

Chartres was in doubt about the room.

“Room, be hanged! She must come here—in front; where else would you let her sit? You and I can stand if the seats are claimed. Hang their being engaged, my good fellow!” Here he turned rapidly to his wife.

“Just imagine, Annie—Good God! to think of the sly fellow having such a lovely houri at home all this time!”

“Go and bring her here directly, Chartres,” Annie says.

Chartres, smiling at his hearty friend’s enthusiasm, went and led his wife to his friends; and Short received a rather contemptuous look from his Annie, of which, however, he seemed wholly unconscious.

" My friends Mr. and Mrs. Short—Mrs. Chartres," and Lucy took Short's seat next to his wife.

The two men were standing, or rather leaning, on the sides of the boxes close to Mrs. Short.

" Your photographs—cartes, you know—are not a bit like you, Mrs. Chartres," said Short, turning to Lucy, " not a bit in the world. We have seen them several times. Chartres showed it to Annie and me." Short was generally too quick for good grammar.

Lucy blushed. She perfectly well knew what was meant whenever photographs and she were coupled in allusion. The fact was that these said sun pictures were not at all like her—with the exception of the generally inexpressive people. In fact, to a person who had never seen her, they, so far from giving an idea of what she really was, conveyed a totally different impression. Her face was the despair of all photographers; and the more respectable and independent among these gentlemen, allowed the fact, though they lost a customer thereby. It is

doubtful whether even a good artist could have caught the peculiar girlish innocent expression of her features, even in their moments of perfect repose. Excited, they never ceased varying; and equally in any mood they never lost the risible cast given to the face by a pure and innocent heart.

"O, no; not a bit like you, Mrs. Chartres."

"What do you think of my wife's photographs, Mrs. Short?" William mischievously put in.

Mrs. Short did not answer for a moment. She was all secret attention though to the questioner. Her tone and manner Lucy hardly understood. Chartres did though. He was pretty quick and guessed her mind. It is not extremely difficult indeed to understand the feelings of a hitherto unconquered belle now thrown into the shade by a rival.

"You mean, Mrs. Chartres' likeness? I hardly remember it;" and then Annie looked with a great show of eagerness round the house.

Chartres was a little annoyed and a little amused. "I always tell her," he said, "that

her face is not one to be remembered. Is it?"

"Nonsense, my good fellow!" Short put in. "How in the world could you tell her such a thing?"

Lucy had not heard the last few remarks concerning her portraits. It was not intended she should. And now the musicians began tuning their instruments. The two pretty women gradually got into conversation together, one weighing well every word which she was about to say, the other speaking in her own natural and unassuming way which so soon ought to break down even some of the barriers of female jealousy. The sittings in the boxes were now rapidly filling. There was a pause in the general conversation, while the impatient pit and gallery thumped out the signal that time was up.

A brilliant idea here seized upon the irrepressible husband of Annie. "Annie, my love," he said, leaning over towards his wife, "isn't the Governor to be here, tonight?"

"I'm sure I do not know," was the curt reply.

"Yes, I think he is, dear ; in fact, I'm sure he is," said Short, answering himself quite gaily, and in no wise dashed.

"It is really nothing to me whether he is or not, Philip."

"It'll be something to Chartres though, I'll bet a guinea," Short said, and he gleefully looked at every one of his three auditors one after the other, smiling, and bursting with hidden meanings.

"Why he is here, Short ; don't you see him ?" Chartres said. And so the Governor was there, he and his aides and family, as Mrs. Short already very well knew.

Short, the irrepressible, was—as we have already said—the second master in the College where Chartres was a professor. His salary was, for the berth, a good one, and no doubt he was worth it. As far as his attainments went he certainly was ; for he had taken very high honours in his University, and must have been, at one time, a reading man. He was an exceedingly well-informed man, an accomplished linguist and a fair musician. We already know how fine his personal appearance was ; yet with all these attributes

of power he was a man of but little influence among men, and, after a few weeks' acquaintance, of positively none at all among women. He was of good family moreover; a thing women are especially favourable to; and yet all this didn't help him to gain either a great deal of love or respect.

His wife was an extremely elegant showy woman, now in the very prime of her beauty. She was the daughter of a very wealthy land-owner in New South Wales, and had been educated in England and France; she was, at the time we introduce her, one of the belles of Melbourne; and no ball in the city was considered perfect unless she consented to grace it. Her own private income amounted to about two hundred a year from some house property at Sydney. Consequently the pair who had only three children, managed to live among the leading people of the colony, and somehow to keep tolerable pace with them.

They were neither of them happy though. The husband, it is true, leaned upon his wife—that is mentally; which, however, was considerably more than she did upon him;

and he loved her, too, in his way, much more than she did him. She did not take much pains about concealing his failings from others, and people consequently looked and laughed and talked about her. The fact is, that the well-bred, highly educated, handsome Short was not a man to be loved by any woman ; he was a fidget, and herein lay the great secret of his non-influence over his wife. Women, quick and actively minded enough themselves, cannot endure in men that quickness and activity of a certain sort which constitutes fidgetiness. A fidget-minded man is certainly one in whom no determination concerning great objects can exist ; and everybody knows how impossible it is for a man, in whom there is no fixity of purpose, to influence other people, especially women.

Annie had, at first, been much taken with her fine-looking lover's appearance, and his vast amount of learning. These made him a reasonable conquest, and just at the time he paid his addresses to her, she had no better offers on hand ; so she married him. Short, too, like other men, was doubtless more

careful as a lover than as a husband, in concealing his weak points; moreover, fidgets are not absolutely intolerable when one is not forced to be in their company at all times. So Miss Milton and Philip Short became man and wife.

There was an overflowing house that night. It was the last appearance of the greatest actor Australia had then ever known. Poor fellow; how little did he or his audience imagine that they would never meet more! In his farewell address, how enthusiastically he was cheered, when he said how much he loved Australia, and how anxiously he looked forward for the day when he should again come to it—back to his many dear friends. He was drowned, as we all know, in the fatal ‘London,’ leaving not a man behind him who could fitly take his high place. This evening, all the talent, wealth, and fashion of Melbourne were in the house; and well might Lucy Chartres gaze in unaffected surprise at the jewels and costly raiment of the women around her. Perhaps in no part of the world is there a more expensively-dressed population than in Australia. The very servant girls in

this country have as “necessaries” in their wardrobes, silks and laces which not very many English middle-class ladies possess. That species of self-immolation styled “dressing to death,” is nowhere more practised than in Melbourne and Sydney. And yet there is a vast difference between a colonial assemblage at a theatre or a concert, and an English one.

In London, few under the condition of gentlefolk pay guineas and half-guineas, or even the more humble crown for admittance anywhere. In the Australias, on the contrary, no reasonable charge could confine an audience to the higher class of people. Money is too plentiful among all grades, and for this reason persons of every conceivable condition in life make up a colonial audience, where in older and poorer countries it would be composed of gentlefolk only.

In consequence of this, all the dress and jewels in the world could not make one assemblage at all comparable with the other; the presence or absence of tone or *ton* and, of course, a striking difference in figures, faces and mien, make dissimilarities too appa-

rent not to be noticed at a single glance. Nor is it fair to expect otherwise, however much cavillers may talk. In a new country everyone works more or less for his bread—women included ; and it is not reasonable to look for that beauty and elegance among women who are burdened with the cares of labour, which exists in those who should have all the graceful *abandon* that is fostered by leisure, and whom centuries of independence and breeding, and years of education and culture have brought to the highest refinement of mind and body.

What Chartres guessed would happen, did, before the end of the first act. The sittings which Short had persuaded him to usurp were claimed. When the play commenced, Chartres had sat down next to Mrs. Short, while Short had seated himself beside Lucy.

A lady gorgeously appareled and jewelled, and what is not usual in Australia, overflowing with obesity, came down, followed by a hooknosed, dark little man. The latter politely enough drew Chartres' attention to the fact that he was occupying a sitting not his own. "I am sorry to disturb you," he

said ; “but there has, no doubt, been some mistake about the tickets. I took mine three days ago.”

Chartres smiled and apologised. “I am afraid,” he said, “that I can’t plead anything but guilty in the matter, for I paid at the door. At all events, I shall vacate my seat and my friend will, no doubt, do the same ;” and he placed the stout lady next to Mrs. Short, who, in her languid, weary way hardly turned her head to glance at her large companion.

Then he endeavoured to attract Short’s attention from the stage, which was not to be lightly done however. Whenever Short was attentive to anything, he was, for the moment, wholly absorbed by it ; and this was his condition now.

“ Oh—ah ! what, Chartres ?” he asked, when his attention was at length gained by a few vigorous pokes in the back.

“ How the deuce shall we manage about the seat ?” whispered Chartres, in some perplexity, for he knew Short had a right to his own, which Lucy now occupied ; “ I have already given up mine.”

"Let him stand—who is it?" was the answer, peering round and pushing Chartres out of the line of vision. Then Short was up in a second, and warmly shaking hands with the little gentleman. "Another acquaintance!" thought Chartres; "I wonder how many people Short does know?"

The fact is that Short knew pretty nearly everyone in Melbourne, and a good many out of it. His peculiar forte seemed to be acquaintance-making. The new comer was a well-known settler, whose income was generally said to be upwards of twenty thousand a year. Eighteen years before, he was a poor Scotch shepherd, as his father had been, and now he was a millionaire.

Short at once introduced him to Mrs. Chartres, whose beauty the elderly gentleman seemed much impressed by.

"Just look at the fellow!" Short whispered so loudly, that Chartres was in an agony lest he should be overheard. "He's surprised, and I don't wonder at him. Chartres, you ought to be a happy fellow! Why, look at the glasses pointed this way."

"At your wife!" Chartres said.

"Annie, he says that an armament of opera-glasses is pointed at you."

Annie did really for the first time to-night look gracious.

"At you Philip, I should say," and Philip laughed wondrously gleefully too, and looked from the glasses to his friends, and—with the quick jerk of a hen's neck—from his friends to the glasses. Was not Annie again her gracious self! He soon made another pitfall though for himself and Annie.

"There, I told you so!" said he to his wife; "just look at the Governor and his aide; they are looking over here. Oughtn't Chartres to be a proud man, my dear, to have such admiration bestowed on his wife?"

Mrs. Chartres and the rich friend were talking together just at this time—fortunately.

Lucy's eyes met her husband's, and she saw with magnificent pride and pleasure the love which irradiated his countenance. She was triumphing, and she knew it, and was glad and grateful for her husband's sake; yet a pang went through her sensitive bosom as she saw her younger rival's bitter look.

“ If Short would only be quiet ! ” Chartres whispered to her.

“ What is he doing ? ”

“ Talking about a young lady very near, and putting his wife out of temper.”

“ Try and stop him, dear.”

“ Try and stop a torrent ! ”

Chartres, however, did manage to get affairs into better trim, by giving some tolerably broad hints to Short that it would be better to turn his attention to his own wife rather than to the praising of other women. He got Annie, too, pretty well out of her sulks by means of a few well distributed compliments ; and on the whole, the evening passed off very well. To Chartres and his wife that night was one not to be soon forgotten.

It is true enough that Chartres was proud, and very proud of the notice the rare beauty of his wife attracted ; and yet, it was a thorn in his side—one felt for the first time then. Who was he to have such a woman’s love ? why should he be the possessor of a girl whom the highest noblemen, the wealthiest, the cleverest men in Europe or America

would gladly have a smile from ? The aristocracy of beauty is—in a woman—unmeasurably above all other aristocracies ; and yet he whom—as the husband of such a woman—the world seemed to expect to be a man of mark, was nobody ; hardly in the rank of gentlemen ! The more he thought over his position, the more he was galled ; the more he felt that he ought to be something above the crowd. His wife's beauty henceforward was a standing reproach to his common mediocrity. But it served one good purpose at all events—it was an ever present incitement to his wishes and efforts to raise himself.

People in the comparatively small city of Melbourne soon began asking who the new beauty was. And Chartres knew it ; and the thorn pricked him the more deeply, for both good and evil.

It was past midnight when they reached home ; and father and the children were asleep. Mrs. Crowley had—unasked—prepared and laid a nice little supper ready for her friends.

And so ended the first day of the reunited family in their new land.

CHAPTER XII.

LUCY and father had still an unexpected pleasure to come ; and this arrived next day.

They were sitting round the breakfast table, Mr. Crowley had just made his best bow and departed, what, however, he daily did from ten until six no one knew.

“ I have leave of absence from the college for to-day, Mrs. Crowley, and so I think I had better show our friends the sights at once.”

“ Will it be *that* first ? ” Mrs. Crowley asked mysteriously.

“ I think so,” Chartres as mysteriously answered.

“ And what may ‘*that*’ be, Mrs. Crowley ? ” Lucy asked.

“ Go with him, my love, and you’ll soon

see. It's big enough to be sure; most as large as this house."

"Papa, can you help me?"

"My dear, no; nor would I even if I had permission. Go and get your things on and see for yourself."

So Chartres took his wife and their eldest boy out, and Lucy felt for the first time that day what an unmitigated tyrant an Australian sun is.

"Of course, Lucy dear, you know we cannot afford to live at Crowley's. They would have to charge us about five pounds a week, and seeing that just now I am making hardly so much, that would never do."

"We must move to a house of our own, William, and we shall be able to live on two or three pounds a week. I hope indeed to be able to make that much myself."

"Then we will see about a house at once. Would you like something in this style, eh?" and Chartres pointed to a very pretty cottage fronted by a verandah, and embosomed in foliage. The garden in front was a perfect model of neatness. "There is a kitchen-

garden and orchard a quarter of an acre in extent at the back, and the rent is only fifteen shillings a week."

"Oh, the lovely little place!" cried Lucy with enthusiasm. "I think I could live and die there contentedly with you, and just enough to support us. But the rent—forty pounds a year seems very high."

"You are not in England now. Shall we go in and see the place?"

"Can we? Perhaps it is not to let."

"Never mind that, I can manage to get in." And he opened the garden gate, and much to his wife's surprise took a key out of his pocket and ushered her into the gratefully cool cottage.

She sat down in the room they entered, glad to get away from the hot sun, and looked round in wonder.

"This is what Mrs. Crowley told me to show you, Lucy; and all in it is yours."

Any person in Lucy's place might well have been surprised and pleased. The room was furnished in scarlet, gold and white, the last much predominating. There was nothing as it seemed exceedingly expensive-looking

in the place, and yet everything looked rare and choice. The carpet was only canvas bordered with scarlet, and the chairs were only those known as X chairs; how then did it happen that everything appeared so exquisite? Yes, and the furnishing of this room was really expensive and in the most expensive way too. It was directed by expenditure of taste, and who does not know how much more valuable that is than mere time and labour.

“What are you wondering at, Lucy—where all the money came from?”

“As some cleverer person than I wondered last night with regard to my dress? No, William dear, I shall not think that all this beauty cost you—in money—one fourth of what it would cost a man with less taste to furnish a dressing-closet.”

“And you are perfectly right in thinking that it didn’t cost much. The fact is that every bit of the carving on the tables and couches is done by myself; and as to the colouring of the chairs and other things, a little white paint, gold leaf, and varnish went a long way. Then the saw mills pro-

vide any amount of pretty moulding at a few pence a foot; your humble servant found the most valuable thing of all—the labour. If all trades fail, I can turn upholsterer you see."

Then they went through the remaining rooms, which were all equally prettily furnished.

"But where did you get the money, William, to buy what you must have bought? I know you didn't make the iron bedsteads and the kitchen utensils, and the fenders and stoves.

"Never mind that. But tell me, do you think you will be able to help me to pay off any little balance that may be owing for them?"

"Think dear? I will, I must."

"Then we won't talk much about what they cost until you can begin to help me to earn lots of money. Come out and look at the garden. I took it a month ago and I've been working pretty hard at it ever since."

The garden was in perfect order, as indeed everything was; and Lucy was fairly enchanted with her new home.

" You are a dear, good, hardworking fellow, William," she said, " Oh, what a pity, what a pity if such a man as you were to fail in getting on!" As she said this she looked up earnestly into her husband's face. Had she any prescience that her words would touch a sensitive rankling chord in his heart?

Chartres turned from her—not this time towards her. " Pshaw, why shouldn't I get on Lucy, what's to hinder me? I must."

" You must, William," said his wife, and she went round him to force his regard to rest on her. " Why should we not? Have you any doubt of it?"

" Look, Lucy, come and see the contrivance I have made for irrigating these little seed-beds."

" Oh, leave the seed-beds, William, and look at me. Why—what—what is it?"

" Why what, what is what? God bless dame Partlett the hen; what flutters her feathers?"

She came up close to him, and took his hands in hers.

" Now, William, I must see your face. I do see it, and—and—"

"And—and, thereupon you will prophesy."

"And thereupon, Sir, I will. But I can't jest now, William dear; I would rather—" her voice falters.

"Cry? Weep—dissolve in tears like Niobe for the loss of her children, eh?"

"If I cry, it will not be like Niobe, but like myself, for the loss of my husband's confidence."

"That's right. Hit him hard, madam."

"But, dear William, do tell me. Is there anything on your mind? Why don't you confide in me?"

"Go on, go on. The old style revived."

"Ah! William, the old style in yourself you mean; and the old style not dead either. Oh! if you would only confide your troubles in me."

"Troubles! why should I bother you with them? I love you too much to do that."

"You mean you don't love me well enough."

"Capital. How she looks as if she believed that! Is not my back broad enough to bear my own cares?"

"Ah! William, the old thing. Not altered a bit—just the same!" and a sobbing fit seemed ready to come.

"Listen, Mrs. Chartres, and be edified."

"There's a darling fellow! Now you will tell me, and I shall be able to lighten your trouble so much," and Lucy listened attentively.

"Horace says—"

"Oh! bother Horace! William—"

"Horace says, 'He who travels though he changes the climate, yet does not alter his disposition *qui trans mare currit*,' you know."

It was too difficult to keep a perfectly composed countenance, so a supernaturally grave one had to be put on. The speaker's eyes brightened though, *nolens volens*, and this all but ended the discussion, for Lucy saw, and her own loving eyes brightened in sympathy.

"I don't care for Horace, Sir; besides I don't think Horace ever said that. I believe you told me yourself that some one else said it. But William, dear William—"

"Then we will eschew Horace. And now for my secret."

“Really, this time, darling?”

“Really;” and he took her to his bosom. “There is nothing the matter with your unworthy owner, Lucy dearest. It is true, that some money has still to be paid for the furniture of this little home of ours; but beyond that, I don’t owe ten pounds in the world.”

“But your mind is not at ease, William, I know it. Now confess it to me.” And the speaker’s forehead wrinkled deeply in anxious expectation.

“Could it be otherwise than at ease, foolish girl, at such a happy time as this, too—my beautiful wife and chicks just come to me?”

“Ah! my love, my own, I trust you are not trying to deceive me!”

“I am not, Lucy. I know I could not deceive your anxious love, even if I were to try; but I am not even trying. And now come along and see your new metropolis.”

How easy self-deception is! Chartres, as he uttered the words above, did so in sincerity. He had never analysed his growing discontents, and therefore having no

name to give to one or the other of them, he could not exactly allude to them in definite terms. And yet he suffered acutely. He was actually beginning to become entangled, and if not able to free himself, would ultimately assuredly be overwhelmed in a web of the very worst and most glutinous of the Devil's own weaving—despair of success.

And hereupon we may say that we take this to be worthy of the name of a “colonial disease,” seeing the lamentable frequency of its consequences in Australia. It is through this that so many promising young men are lost to society—driven for solace to the bars of the public-house, to drunkenness, delirium, and death. Through it, too, that so many well-born men, full of hope and high aspirations on their arriving in the colony, lose step by step all their self-command and self-respect, and potter along through their listless days to a premature grave. People usually come abroad with expectations altogether too great for fulfilment; and failing in their unreasonable hope, disgust and despair take possession of them, and they are lost.

Chartres, like thousands of others, had learned to look upon emigration as the final and speedy cure for all his English pecuniary disorders. He arrived in Melbourne without money, beyond a few pounds, and without a single friend in the colony. Like those of others too, his plans were so vague that he could not have given a good account of one of them had he been asked. We already have heard of his failure at the so-called new gold fields, upon which he returned to Melbourne, and very fortunately got the appointment which he now held. Here, in teaching—and skilled teaching is required now-a-days—he had a resource which every even highly educated man has not; and yet he was far from being satisfied. “To think that I have come half round the world for a beggarly four pounds a week,” was his frequent internal cry. However, Lucy and the children were to be brought out, and much as he grumbled at his not jumping into a fortune at once, he worked manfully at procuring a home for them. Possibly, had he suffered a little more knocking about the bush than he actually had—and that his self-

respect had survived the ordeal—he would have been more contented with his progress than he now was.

The day he landed from the vessel in which he returned from the gold-fields, he had looked upon his present situation which he then heard of as a really good thing, as a refuge from severe manual labour from want of any kind ; and yet three months afterwards he was far from being a contented man. So true is it that our troubles are nearly all comparative, and that what a man will accept as a perfect godsend at one time, at another he will scout as beneath his notice.

But there was still another and a greater cause for dissatisfaction than mere want of large possessions. It is a want which in some men, even large possessions will not satisfy, and that is love of notoriety. They say Ambition grows upon a man as he gets over his very youthful days ; and this certainly was the case with Chartres. Within the past year—now that as in England he had no longer to struggle for a mere livelihood, and to give all his mind to the obtaining sufficient for his daily wants, he had

become more than heretofore filled with the idea of "coming out of the crowd" somehow, though how he could not settle. He was in this respect like a vast number of other mortals, so that when we write of his ambitious wishes we write of those of every third or fourth man, and nearly every woman in the world.

Chartres, now in his thirty-first year, and since his beauteous wife has rejoined him in Australia, grew more ambitious every day. His father believed in his talent; his wife never doubted it; and he himself encouraged the idea that he could become something out of the common. Six years ago, after his marriage, they had all three many a time sat together and discussed his possible future. Was he to be an author? was the first idea, as it is generally the first of the majority of educated persons. "Yes," cried the young wife, enthusiastically, remembering the exceedingly commonplace verses he now and then wrote in her honour. "No," said father, and he was right.

Chartres was really a good musician, for an amateur. He was a composer in a small

way. It was a gift of nature to him that he could even improvise a tune of any description. He had often done this to the astonishment of doubting hearers; and in this way composed things which he himself would gladly have put upon paper and preserved. He was a good pianist too, and had a real talent for music. His quick ear could even, comparatively untrained as it was, detect and follow the notes of each instrument in a band of twenty performers. He often longed to become a professional musician—a composer. Here was a grand career open to him if—Oh! those “ifs!” And then as he read the lives of eminent musicians, and saw an account of their long studies and what labour they had to go through in order to qualify themselves for writing music, his heart would sink with despair, and the usual invectives against Fortune would come forth.

If he had only been brought up as an artist or articled to an engineer! If he could have had a profession—have been a doctor or a barrister, or even a preacher! If he had any start at all given him at the proper

A. S. T. TO MARY

It is hard to think of the life I
lead at present. It is like a dream
of a dream. I have no definite purpose
in life. I have no real friends.
I have no money. I have no home.
I have no work. I have no money to live
on. I have no place to go. I have no
place to sleep. I have no place to eat.
I have no place to drink.

I am very glad that we are still
here in England. This was the best
of all the countries I have been in.
I have had more of the free press here than
the papers of course have given from all
the other countries. We are able to see more
of our children in the evening. She still knew
and said before she left suspended. Her
mind seems better able to believe in the
possibility of finding in this new El Dorado of
ours. I am afraid see her dear good husband,
she will not care to her, see him growing
very very very much melancholy, more moody,
more suspicious, and above all, more fantastic
than in those days of gloom in England he
had living there.

Mink in fact, he always had some disposi-

tion this way ever since she had known him, but now it seemed to fasten itself upon him, and show itself in every act. She formerly had many a time—seldom indeed failing—cheered him up under his troubles with the assurance : “ We shall have no more cares, dear, in beautiful Australia ; we shall soon be rich there—and never unhappy ! ”

Like all other intending emigrants, they had made the word Emigration the panacea for all their troubles. Now they were in their new home, they both found how marvellously little difference there is between one habitable part of the world and another. The brightness of change being gone, they found that the hot sun affected them here as in England ; that the wind howled mournfully alike in both countries, and made the windows rattle at night, that wet weather was saddening, and gave them colds as it did in London ; and that dull wintry weather made them miserable in the Southern hemisphere as it did in the Northern. So Lucy’s talisman—Australia—was now lost to her ; and what other could affect him for happiness, if even her love could not !

We must now imagine the little family comfortably placed in their new pretty home, and their new life reunited become a thing of custom. Lucy very soon got pupils who brought her in nearly a hundred a year; and her husband continued still in the College, looking out and hoping for a good appointment as head-master, though finding his hopes very often frustrated, because of his not having been able to finish his curriculum and get his degree. Less efficient, less skilful, and in every way men of less worth got appointments in Victoria and the neighbouring colonies over his head, from the fact that they wrote B.A. after their names. Here again was a series of really disheartening blows to bear up against.

CHAPTER XIII.

A very intimate acquaintance now existed between the Shorts and Chartreses ; and they were frequently at each other's houses.

"I must congratulate you, Mrs. Short, on Philip's appointment to the new Grammar School. There will be a good income."

Short had just been appointed rector of a new school.

"I really don't much care !" Annie said in her wearied way.

"Don't care, my love ! Why it will bring us in a clear income of a thousand a year, if not more !" Short said in surprise.

"Lucky fellow that you are, Short ! Poor I need never hope to get such an appointment as that."

Mrs. Short was sitting at the window looking out as they were speaking. She turned

her head now to look into the speaker's face.

Short laughed in his hearty way, and jingled the keys in his pockets.

"Why should you not get such an appointment as Philip's, Mr. Chartres? Why, in fact, should you not get even a better one?"

"For a very simple reason. I have no degree."

"Then, my dear, of course you know that it was my testimonials from my College that got me this place. Surely you know that," Short said triumphantly. "Don't you see—Chartres unfortunately left the university the year before he should have graduated; and his having no degree will always be a tremendous drawback to him—always."

"It is a pity, Philip dear, that people can't graduate in common sense," Annie said, laughing towards him, but *thinking* towards Chartres. She was vexed at Philip's want of thought.

"Annie has the highest opinion, Chartres, of what she calls your sensible dignity. In fact, she is often at me to make me model my sense after yours," Short said. He was not a whit dashed; he rather liked to be

thought careless or foolish by his wife ; it answered the purpose of throwing much responsibility on her shoulders ; indeed, it is by no means an unusual thing for many husbands to do with regard to their spouses.

“ Philip ! You are such a goose !” said Annie, laughing with her voice and frowning with her face.

“ I really think I must model him, Mrs. Short,” Chartres said, laughing too. But he was very vexed. “ He is one of those happy-go-lucky, fortunate fellows, the admiration of the women, and the envy of the men ; he must be modelled on a more unprosperous style.”

“ Cynical fellow ! Hear him, Annie !”

“ Cynical, Mr. Chartres ! I won’t mind him, Philip !”

“ She says she won’t mind you, Chartres ; but she does, and will, for all that. It is always with me, ‘ why don’t you do as Mr. Chartres does ?’ here ; ‘ and why don’t I behave as Mr. Chartres does’ there ?”

“ He talks too much, Mr. Chartres ; and I tell him to be a little more taciturn, like you, or any one else less talkative than himself,”

Annie explained. She blushed much as she spoke ; and as Chartres was not near her husband—in fact, he was standing behind her chair, which was sideways by the window—she frowned at Philip to stop this. But Philip responded merely with an amiable smile.

“ You would like me to be as glum as Chartres looks to-day, for instance. Would you, Annie—eh ? ”

“ Philip, you goose, do have sense ! ”

“ Why, Chartres, old fellow, what makes you look so down-hearted ? ”

“ I wish I could borrow some of your superfluous spirits and prosperity,” Chartres said, laughing.

“ You are always a serious-looking fellow ; but you have been more dignified-looking than ever these few days back. What should a fine-looking fellow like you—with such a pretty and affectionate wife too—have to do with seriousness ? ” And Philip whisked round on his left heel and rattled his keys again.

Annie had a fan in her hand, and over this she could read Chartres’ features. And read them she did ; or tried to do so. In fact, it

was a habit of hers, when William or his wife was with her, either together or singly, seldom to leave off looking at their faces. She watched his countenance harder than ever at this allusion to his wife. He smiled unconsciously, as he always did, when Lucy's name was mentioned.

“Perhaps, Short, it may be because of this very affection you talk of, that a man may be glum as you style it.”

He said this because it rose of itself to his lips; but he was angry with himself for saying it.

“Lucy is quite well—is she not?” Annie asked.

“Yes, of course she is,” Chartres answered.

“She was born to be the wife of a man with ten thousand a year!” Short said solemnly. “And so were you, Chartres.”

“Born to be the wife of a man with ten thousand a year, was he, Philip?”

Philip laughed consumedly at his blunder. Of course the others joined. After that Annie went out of the room.

“Short, my dear fellow,” Chartres said,

"the fact is, that I am in a little bit of a fix ; and I want you to help me out of it—though I know well enough it is rather a ticklish thing to ask a man to do."

Short stopped, as to his bodily movements, such as heel-turning, stepping the room, and key-jingling, and put on a face suitable to the occasion.

"Wait a bit !" he said hurriedly and mysteriously, although Chartres was not speaking. "Hush ! are the women to know anything about this ?"

"As far as my wife is concerned—no, decidedly !" Chartres said. "Of course you will manage just as you please. However, I hope it won't come to Lucy's ears through Mrs. Short."

"That will do !" and Short looked with the tragic air of a grand conspirator towards the door. "That will do ; things get troublesome when the women come to know them. What is it, old fellow ?"

"Well, as you know, I had to buy a good many necessary things when my family came ; and the fact is, that I gave a bill at four months for sixty pounds—gave it to the

upholsterer ; and I can't meet it. Can you advise me what to do ?"

Short sat down and stretched out his long legs. He didn't make any answer for a minute, and during that minute his friend saw, for the first time, a really serious "internal" look in his face. A deep flush came over Chartres' countenance. To ask a favour of Short, the good-natured, light-hearted, friendly fellow was one thing. To see that man all of a sudden become serious, not to say gloomy, because of that asking, was another. And Chartres flushed and felt—what you and I, Sir, have felt on occasions not unlike this.

" It's a serious affair, Chartres ! How is it you can't meet the bill ? Money is devilish hard to get now-a-days."

" My dear fellow, you surely know well enough how small my income is ; and just at this time too, how impossible it has been for me to put by anything. The father and the youngsters (he didn't say wife) were a very heavy expense, you know ; and the clothes and what-not for all of them——." He stopped. Even to this thoughtless friend

Short, he couldn't bring himself to lay bare his home affections, and explain how very hard it would have been latterly to deny those he loved whatever little comforts they wanted.

"Exactly, Chartres ; of course—of course. But when a man borrows money, he expects to be able to repay it. He counts his chickens you know—looks at his resources!" Short said, with a poor essay at making a joke.

"I did of course expect to meet the bill. When I gave it I had every reasonable prospect of getting that berth at Castlemaine that Watson now has. However, I shall soon be able to pay the money. And, Short, you are now a comparatively rich individual, and I should easily be able to repay you this sixty pounds—if not three months hence, at all events six. It will be a safe debt I think, old fellow ; and then there will be the ten per cent interest you know. It will only be a new way of embarking some of your superfluous cash."

It will be observed that Chartres spoke in a roundabout conditional manner. He didn't once ask Short for the loan of the money. He couldn't bring himself to form the

necessary words. That is the kind of man he was. He couldn't do what—in this case—ninety-nine out of every hundred men would not have hesitated about.

Short shook his head. Chartres had never seen him do this before, at least in seriousness. Seeing it now for the first time, and himself being the occasion, he took it almost as an insult; and his hand that in a friendly manner had been touching Short's elbow was quickly withdrawn. He was galled a thousand times more than if Short had always been a serious careful man.

"I have had so many expenses myself lately, Chartres, that I am sorry to say I really haven't the ready cash to meet the bill for you. In fact, I am afraid I shall soon have to borrow myself to meet the expenses of my new position."

Chartres felt sick at heart. "Here," he could not help thinking, "is a man with upwards of a thousand a year clear income now, no doubt he will have double that shortly, and with all his professed friendship he can shake his foolish head at me." He felt bitterly indeed.

"I am deeply—deeply sorry, Short, that I hinted at your lending me this small sum of money. It is without risk too."

"Borrowers always say that, old fellow, and they think so, too," Short said. He had no idea that he was wounding Chartres to the very quick by saying this. If he had he would not have said so. "But," he continued, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll put my name to a renewal for you."

Chartres had to pocket some of his pride, just as you and I, Sir, have had to do.

"My dear fellow," he said cheerfully, "a thousand thanks. I want no more," and he gave a great sigh of relief. "And now it's all settled, old fellow, I may tell you that I have been three days and as many nights in making up my mind to ask this favour of you."

"You still have the furniture you owe for?" Short asked.

"Of course I have. You see it every other day, old fellow."

"Then the way we can manage will be this: you can execute to me a bill of sale

over the goods, and that will be satisfactory for both parties."

Chartres was humiliated beyond endurance. If, as has been already stated, his friend had been another kind of man, he could have borne it. He couldn't now though. Short to distrust him—to patronise him! It was too absurd. He stood up to go away.

"It doesn't matter now, Short, thank you. I won't trouble your kindness, perhaps I shall be able to do without it. Indeed I have just thought of a plan by which I can settle the matter easily."

"Very well, my dear fellow, I'm glad to hear it. I'm sure I offered to do all I could reasonably be expected to do in the case."

"Let us drop the subject," Chartres said, shortly. "By-the-by I shall not be able to go with you to the races on Monday. Will you mention this to Mrs. Short. And now I have to be home early this evening, so I must be off."

"No—no. Stay and have dinner."

"Thank you," Chartres said, turning from the door whose handle he held in his hand, "thank you, no," and he went out.

Annie Short was about entering the room as Chartres left it ; and they met in the hall. She saw in a glance that he was put out. Indeed it was never very difficult for anybody to see by his face when that was the case. His "putting out" now was not through anger however. Latterly when rebuffs and troubles came upon him, as they will come upon any man prosperous or unfortunate, his fatalistic tendency made him accept them almost meekly—accept them as inevitable to him because he was not a prosperous man ; and feel grief rather than anger with those through whom they came. He had been wounded to the quick by Short, and yet now, after his first angry flush of humiliation had passed away he was not incensed against him. "Why should I dislike him because of this ? Others would have done just as he has. Every man in the world would have done just the same. I must only bear it ; that is all." So he bowed meekly to his destiny and tried to philosophise about it. He was very sad in truth. His drooping eyelids and his closed mouth, and lowered head showed this to Annie, who was so well practised in

reading his features. And she spoke kindly to him.

“ You are surely not going, Mr. Chartres. Before dinner too ? ”

“ Thank you, I must, Lucy expects me.”

“ I was sure you would stay and dine ; and,” with a friendly smile, “ do you know I have just been to the kitchen to make your favourite sauce.”

Common-place not to say comical—inasmuch as it related to the pleasing of the digestive organs—as such a little incident as this may seem to everybody except the actors therein, Chartres was now really affected with this proof of kindly feeling shown at such a moment ; one in which his heart looked for no sympathy, and when he bitterly looked upon himself as a friendless man. He had to wait and seem to hesitate for a moment before he could venture to trust his voice, and to reply ; and his very answer was made with a warmth of words and expression which showed Annie how much his mind was excited ; though she could not imagine why.

“ You are really very kind, Mrs. Short.

Indeed you have always been so ; and I have to thank you sincerely. But good bye, I must not stay," and he shook her hand, she silent and wondering at his unusual cordiality, and watching his face with a woman's inquisitive eye.

" Notwithstanding *the* tomatoes," he said, laughing as he opened the street door. " No ; I really cannot stay to-day."

CHAPTER XIV.

PHILIP was whistling his very best, although by no means his loudest, when his wife entered the room. He was turning over the music on the piano as if he had never seen it before, and it was not hard for anyone who knew his ways to see that he too was much vexed.

"So Mr. Chartres would not stay, Philip?"

"No. By-the-by, Annie, my dear, you should learn this out of the opera of 'Lohengrin' that we got from home last month. I had forgotten all about it."

"I had really forgotten it too. I must try it over by-and-by. Is that the opera the King of Bavaria is so fond of?"

"Heaven knows, my dear, I don't," and

Philip turned round to his music again in an impatient manner quite well known though to his wife.

Annie smiled. "Now we shall have it," she thought, and she was right. Now she did have it, and a victory as well. She was a curious girl, as we know; and not at all like her sex in many of their own peculiar and interesting ways—that is not like her sex in her dealings with her husband. Now, for instance, thoroughly anxious as she was to learn what had passed between the two men, she allowed herself to make no sign whatever of having any interest in the matter. It was her custom indeed never to betray inquisitiveness of any kind in things about which Philip had to enlighten her. With Chartres and his wife, and perhaps with two or three other persons in the world she would consent to act like other women, and stoop to show interest and even impatience about small matters. But with her husband she was adamant. Her reticence in this respect gained her his confidence, not to say his reverence; and gaining these she lost nothing. For if he knew anything worth telling, or even not

worth it, he was sure to let her hear it. Sometimes he made a feeble effort—as now—to comport himself as his ideal man should ; but it was only to give way again and to let his tongue wag more than ever. He was fairly bursting now with his something to say ; bursting firstly as silly people do who are over-inflated with a secret, and secondly with having the honour of being able to say something on a subject which he knew would interest Annie.

He put down his music, walked over to his wife, as she stood looking out of the window, and began before he reached her—
“The fact is, Annie, that Chartres wouldn’t——”

“There is the very same boy with the same big bundle gone past again. Do you see him, Philip ? I declare I see him every day at the same hour.”

The victory, for the thousandth time was won ; and she made it the greater in the triumph of her heart. Well, curious as Annie was, one can see after all that she was womanly, and therefore interesting. A man would have accepted his laurels meekly.

"Bother the boy and his bundle! By Jove! I am afraid Chartres is in a fix. He came to-day, wanting to borrow money of me. He will be sold off. Poor fellow; it will be a dreadful thing for him."

The blood rushed to Annie's heart, and thence to her face, making it flush as it seldom did. But she did not even turn round towards Philip. She kept her face towards the street, though she saw nothing there. Had she been another woman, or Philip another man, or had she and he still been as they were, only if she loved him—then she possibly might not have felt so much emotion at the words she heard. Even if she had, she certainly would have turned and looked into her husband's eyes. But Philip and Annie were—as they were; and thus possibly they become the more interesting to us. That is all.

"I thought there was something on his mind," Annie said, naturally expressing in words the substance of her thoughts about the Chartres family for some time past.

"I didn't notice anything particular about

him, until he came here to-day," Philip said.
"Poor devil, though ! he has got enough now on his head to make him throw himself into the water!"

"Philip, how foolishly you do talk!"

"Not at all, my dear. I have always imagined him just the very fellow who would be likely to kill himself off-hand. He doesn't value his life a rush, I believe!"

"Never mind, my dear, what you think. I daresay he wouldn't thank you for your opinion about him."

"Well, poor fellow, it doesn't much matter to us or anybody else, what he may thank us for." Philip, as well as wiser men, knew how to estimate Poverty—at least in words—at the proper value.

Annie was nervously impatient at all this. She wanted to learn particulars, and yet she would not allow Philip to see it. This latter converse was not kept up by Short as a part of his incipient attempt to pique Annie's curiosity. That idea had vanished from his mind shortly after it had entered it. The remarks were made without design. But Annie knew that the full particulars con-

cerning Chartres would come to her ear in due time ; and she waited.

“ We shall have a very large outlay you know, dear, in furnishing the new house. For the school-rooms, and dining-hall, and dormitories, at least four hundred pounds will be required. And then we are going to buy a new buggy and pair, now we are expected to cut a bit of a dash. We must have new furniture too ; so of course I could not, with justice to ourselves, lend a man sixty pounds—he wanted that much.”

“ Did you tell him you *wouldn’t* lend it ? ” Annie asked quietly—almost sadly. She mentally stood in Chartres’ position, and felt how much he must have been humiliated. She knew his terrible pride.

“ My love, how could you ask such a question ? Of course I didn’t insult the man by saying I *wouldn’t* lend him the money. I told him at first what I have just told you about our expenses and so forth, that is all.”

“ And then he went away ? ” Annie asked.

“ No ; no. Let me tell you, my dear. You interrupt one every three or four words ;

and you are looking and speaking just as if a fellow was in the wrong!" Philip said, pettishly.

"You are by no means always in the right, though you invariably think you are," was the short rejoinder, even at the risk of intelligence being cut off.

"Well, my dear;" Short spoke in the blustering manner of men of his kind, saying what he knew from books came from other men's mouths, but which he had no intention should mean much in his own. "Well, my dear, if you are so infatuated with that family as all this, you had better write and tell him to use my name, and help himself at my banker's to what he wants." Then seeing her face flush, he added, "You seem to be in love with the lot of them, from the father down to the youngest child!" Thus taking away any sting which was in his former words; and taking away pretty well all sense also, it was left a speech of Philip Short's, *pur et simple*.

Annie here perceived from her husband's unusual manner of talking, that he was not as people would say "himself." So she took

another line of procedure than governing, and she laughingly said, "You silly boy ! when are you going to get some sense ?"

Then Philip laughed too. And after a little more of this sort of badinage Richard was himself again.

"Ah ! where was I, Annie ? O, yes, by Jove ! Well, after Chartres had asked me, I said I would put my name to a renewal of the bill, and he seemed quite satisfied and thanked me."

Annie asked what a renewal meant ; and was told.

—"But directly, *Sir*, I asked him for the security of a bill of sale upon the furniture, he flared up, and there the matter ended. There's independence for you ! He getting a great favour too !"

"But, Philip—what was the bill of sale ?"

"A bond, my dear, over all his furniture, so that if he had not the money to meet the new bill I could sell him off ;" explained Philip, literally.

"And you really asked him for that, Philip ? O, Philip !" And Annie hid her face in her hands, as people sometimes do

when they are praying. In that moment she could feel all that Chartres had felt. Her hands hadn't gone up to her face to conceal it, either because it was pale or red ; she had put them there as a person does who wants to shut out a shocking sight.

"Why, hang it, Annie, what have I done that you should be so surprised ?" Short asked, ruefully.

Annie's hands were down in an instant, and showed a smiling face. "Nothing, silly fellow, except what I daresay is right among you lords of creation. We women, you know, look at things differently. I was only wondering whether Mr. Chartres wouldn't feel vexed at your asking him for such a security."

"By George, he did feel vexed too. I told you so. And I wonder what the deuce right either he had to feel vexed ! Rather too cheeky in a fellow coming to borrow money—eh!"

His hands were now laid upon his wife's shoulders.

"I wonder whether he will be able to raise the money anywhere else?"

"Hang me if I know, dear ; but I should fancy not, or at least if he does it will only get him into the hands of those bill-doers who will ultimately finish him, and in double quick time too. Thank heaven, we are not in debt. It is an awful thing to be hopelessly involved," Short said, complacently.

"Thank heaven ; but thank me under it, Sir, that you are not very much in debt," Annie said, smiling, whereupon she was at once gratefully kissed.

"Please m'm, dinner is ready," the buttons said, entering the room. And husband and wife went and sat down to their meal.

"I wish—for all his 'huffiness' about the matter—that he had stayed and dined with us," Philip said. "I like him very much ; and I am deuced sorry he has fallen out with us."

"Pooh, nonsense, you great boy ! he hasn't fallen out with us," and then Annie spoke in another tone. "But, Philip dear, seriously, I should, I think, lend him that money, or at least you might put your name to the new bill, and don't ask him for that

bill of sale. Poor Lucy, you know—and we are so friendly—might feel that distrust had grown up between us."

"Certainly, my dear, I will lend the money if you wish. I didn't mean to offend Chartres when I alluded to security. I said it would be best for both parties, that security should be given—didn't I? Poor Chartres! 'pon my soul, I feel for him; he's such a nice unassuming fellow too!"

"And, Philip dear, I should speak to him to-morrow at the college, and tell him you asked for that security without thinking, without for a moment distrusting him. He feels every apparent slight deeply, now he is in debt. They are nice people, too, and so fond of each other. Poor Lucy, I wonder whether she knows he can't pay that money?"

Philip was on the very point of saying "No; I am sure she knows nothing about it!" but just then Annie asked him for the water, and it had time to enter his head that his allowing Chartres to be able to keep a secret from his wife, would have shown him to be more like his (Philip's) ideal man than he

himself really was. Thinking this, he blurted out, "Of course she does."

At twelve o'clock that night Short came home from the theatre—Annie had not gone there—pretty well "on;" and edified his wife with plenty of his own kind of small talk. Then, after taking a few more glasses of spirits and water, he went to bed.

"Let him be ugly, passionate,—aye, even a cripple, but still a man in mind!" And Annie looked on the noble figure of her handsome husband, and knew how little mere matter, even in its grandest form, can supply the place of mind.

William's father, at this time, was away. He had gone on a visit up country, and was purposely left by his son in ignorance of all the pecuniary difficulties of the latter.

CHAPTER XV.

SHORT and Chartres met as usual in their daily avocation in the morning. The former expected cold-shoulders, black looks of all shades, frowns, silent thunder even ; but no such phenomena were to be witnessed. His friend, so far from appearing angry with him, seemed, in fact, more friendly than usual. And here Chartres showed one of his many peculiarities. Men—we may, perhaps, except one in a hundred-thousand—can see but slight wrong in things done against others ; but they behold the evil greatly magnified—intensified into a crime almost—where it affects themselves. Chartres could look upon an injury to himself as if he were only a spectator ; he was not by any means a good hater, and was always only too ready to excuse people's faults.

"It is only the way of the world," he thinks in this matter; "and Short has done me no wrong. In a mercantile point of view he was justified in wanting the best security he could get for his money; he would have been no man of business had he acted otherwise than he did; in fact, it was very kind in him to offer to lend me his name at all. Why should I feel angry with him? has he not offered to do what most men would have refused? Would any one other man of my acquaintance go security for me for sixty pounds?"

Consequently, much to Short's astonishment, Chartres comes over and shakes his hand this morning just as if nothing unusual had passed between them. "For in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head." Yes; this morning poor Short fans the fire upon his own giddy, thoughtless cranium, and it burns there fiercely enough, until he positively has as good as asked pardon of his friend. He does not, after the hand-shaking and friendly greeting, wait until the business of the morning is over; but speaks to Chartres as he superintends the writing class.

"Chartres, old fellow!" he says, putting his hand on Chartres shoulder; "come over here."

And they go out of hearing of the boys.

"About that affair yesterday, you know? I'm very sorry I asked you for that bill of—"

"Bill of sale! Not at all, Short. You did only what every other man would have done. I suppose, had I been a lender, I should have done the same myself. However, I shan't want the money now."

"Nonsense, Chartres; you know you wouldn't have done the same. I know better. But look here; you must let me give you a cheque to-day."

"A thousand thanks, Short; but I really don't want it of you now."

Chartres speaks in his usual friendly manner; he wants the money badly; but his pride had been hurt; his word—which with him is more sacred than most other men's oaths are to them—had been doubted. Now his honour is the plaintiff, and Short's good will and obedience to his wife's behests, the defendant.

Short is really concerned ; he is a soft-hearted soul ; there is no doubt about it, and is anxious to do as he had been bidden—there is no doubt about that either. So at first he refuses to believe that the money is no longer wanted.

“Look here, Chartres ; you really must not be hurt about it, you know. Now tell me the truth—you have not settled about meeting that bill ; you know you haven’t ; come now. And it’s only your confounded pride that keeps you angry with me, old fellow. Now confess it !”

“Really, Short, I shall not need your help. I can manage the bill affair in a new way ; though, mind you, accept my thanks for your kind offer.”

“Are you telling me the truth, Chartres ?”
Short asks almost ruefully.

“My dear fellow, I can assure you that I shall do capitally without troubling you.”

“Once, twice, three times—will you have it ?” Short says, still trying to make light of the matter.

“No !” is the decided answer.
And there ends the matter.

Short has to tell Annie all the ins and outs of this eventful interview.

“Oh, Philip!” is Annie’s comforting remark; “you have perhaps ruined the unfortunate family for ever. You ought to ask God’s forgiveness for it.” This is said, mind you, not at the beginning of the talk about the Chartreses, but after a pretty long and hard time for the thoughtless sinner—nearly a quarter of an hour’s quiet baiting, by the female matador of her giddy, bull-brained husband.

“I don’t want to be forgiven,” says Philip stoutly to his torturer; “and what is more, I won’t be forgiven! Why, Annie, what the deuce have I done that you should go on at a poor devil in this way?” Philip says all this in a childlike pouting way of expostulation.

“Don’t talk to me you great goose!” Annie says, turning away half in anger, half in play. Whenever Philip really began to feel the sting of his wife’s words, he showed his displeasure in such an innocent, rueful, and charmingly boyish manner, that Annie’s anger always began to vanish.

"D—the fellow! That's all I say." And the great handsome goose stamps with its great straight leg.

"All very well, Philip; but you have done the mischief now!" Annie often keeps up these scenes even long after her anger has gone. She does so with this.

"Mischief? What mischief? Confound the fellow. Beggars can't be choosers; there!"

Annie has to keep her face turned away lest he should see her smiling.

"I'm sure I did all I could to show the stuck-up fellow that I was sorry for asking for that security. D—him again. There!" And this is so tremendous, that the sinner now believing himself beyond the reach of mercy, makes for the door.

"Wait a moment, Philip!" and he waited.

Annie perceives that the animal is at bay, and that it is time to end.

"By-the-by, did you not say something about his having said he was able to arrange about the bill?"

"Of course I did," Philip assents eagerly.

"Then we needn't trouble any more about

it. If the money had still been wanted, your offer this morning would have been accepted." And thereupon peace is made.

Annie was a very peculiar being, she was very much like all her sisters by Adam, as far as the emotions of the heart are concerned. They can love; so could she. They can sacrifice self; so could she. They can give up all for the loved one; so could she. It is only necessary to *fill* their hearts—in order to gain their undying love; so with her. But while Tom, Dick and Harry can fill the hearts of Ann, Mary, and Edith, it required a man differing much from these gentlemen to satisfy Annie's heart. Poor light-hearted Philip Short was *not* that man; and it hardly appeared possible he ever could become like him.

It was a fact that Annie could not conceal from herself—the easiest person, by the way, to be deceived in the matter—that she would have given half her existence to be the wife of such a man as Chartres. And yet she was by no means in love with him. All her thoughts about the Chartreses might have been printed and published without causing

her a blush. She liked Chartres—liked him ardently. If she had been another kind of woman she would have loved him. He was a never failing subject of interest to her—he and his dearly loved wife; even their children too.

The two women became very much attached to each other from the first. Now they were “like sisters,” we had nearly said; but we alter it into saying that they were become far more affectionate towards each other than married sisters usually are. Their minds and manners were opposite enough to make the one woman interesting to the other; and thus they grew almost inseparable friends. Annie would come to Lucy’s house when the two men were engaged at business, and talk by the hour about married life, and its cares and hopes. The greatest of her pleasures was to hear Lucy talk away on her always fresh theme—love for her husband and love from him. Once start her on that topic, and she would converse as joyously as ever lark sang over its mate; and Annie would sit and listen to this music time after time, and never weary of it.

CHAPTER XVI.

IT is now within a week of the bill's becoming due; and Chartres has made no more arrangements to meet it than the man in the moon. The fact is, that he sees no way whatever how to do so, now his confounded pride wouldn't let him accept Short's friendly offer. And he is terribly anxious about it. It is his first great difficulty in the "bill" line, and we cannot wonder at his uneasiness. Up to this time he has not told his wife a word about the bill, the thought which is now, as day passes day, actually gnawing into his very brain. "Was he ill? No. Was he troubled about anything? Certainly not. Could Lucy do anything for him—in any way? No; only to leave him to himself." And these are all the thanks the dear would-be comforter receives.

“ Only the blues, Lucy ; and you know I always get over them the quicker when I am left to my morose self.”

So the first that the anxious wife hears of her husband’s impending ruin is from the last person in the world whom she should have looked to for that sort of intelligence—Annie Short.

It is late that night when Chartres comes home. When he sees his wife, he guesses she has learned the cause of his trouble. After he had left his pupils at ten o’clock he had walked along the river-bank for full two hours, conning his poor fortunes, torturing his mind about his money difficulty. Still there is a last hope, and that is that the holder of the bill might renew it without another person’s signature. Failing this, utter ruin must ensue ; the furniture would be sold, and they would have to do what they could in the way of buying-in the fittings for Lucy’s school-room, and some few other absolute necessities.

An honourable Briton in debt is a miserable being ; a colonial man in the same predicament is rather an interesting one. If he

intends to be dishonourable, that is, if he has means which can be turned into cash, he gets over his difficulty somehow, by getting rid, for the occasion, of those means to some friend, and then going through "the Court." If, on the other hand, he is honest, and feels disposed to satisfy his creditors, though he may not have the ready money wherewith to do so, yet he will often find a choice among a dozen contrivances to meet his engagements. Chartres knew nothing at that time of monetary contrivances. I do not think he even knew the commercial value of a good name, though, of course, as a gentleman of refinement, he was very well acquainted with its social value. Look then at the affair as he might, he could not see any way out of his difficulty except by renewing his original bill.

Lucy opens the door, when she hears William's step on the verandah ; and walking into the room before him, stands with her back to the lamp, so that she may see his face well. As usual, he smiles when his eye rests on her ; but she, like a little affectionate fool as she is to-night, simply throws herself

into his arms, and bursts into a fit of sobbing. Smooth her bright hair, pat her cheeks, kiss her hot forehead and her quivering lips as he may, he cannot, for some minutes, compose her enough to get any answer to his question. At length she speaks, and pities her poor dear William, and upbraids him for not having shared his trouble with her.

He makes the old excuse, that he loves her far too well to burden her with his care, and only with the old effect—that is, with no effect all. And poor Lucy says sorrowfully that she knows something dreadful will happen both to him and herself, yet, from this system of his. “It can lead to no good, William. I feel a horrid presentiment that one day we shall both be made miserable for ever through it,” she prophesies.

“Not miserable *for ever* through anything like that,” he says, with an emphasis on the *for ever*. “Not for ever, Lucy; that means beyond the grave,” he adds quietly.

And then her tears only flow afresh, and she sobs again, poor thing, instead of being comforted by what he means as consoling

words. But why should he speak in this strange way?

"Oh, William! I know what your mind has been running on to-night. You have been very miserable coming home!" Then she raises her head from off his shoulders and reads his face again, and says, "Now tell me the truth, William; tell me the whole truth—what time was it when you left your class?"

"It was not at the ordinary time; in fact, it was much later than usual, Lucy."

But this does not satisfy the earnest questioner.

"But what o'clock was it? you generally leave at ten. What time did you come away to-night, William?"

So William tells the truth and answers: "At about a quarter to eleven."

Did he go anywhere after that? No; he merely took a stroll round by the river-side homewards; and he must have sauntered along very slowly, enjoying the cool, balmy air, after the rain. That is what has delayed him until now.

"Until past one o'clock my poor, poor William! Ah, I know how you have been

torturing yourself ; yes, and I know too, what dreadful thoughts have been in your poor aching head. Oh ! for God's sake—for my sake, and the dear children's, don't—don't ! Pray—pray, try and rouse yourself—try and battle a little longer against our cruel fate, against your trials. Do, William—pray to God and He will help you !” and the poor little woman is in an almost frenzied state, persuading herself that her dear afflicted husband's mind has to-night been running on self-destruction. Once or twice before has she charged him with meditating suicide ; once when he was very wretched and desponding had he not foolishly said that he believed she would—with father—do better if he were dead, out of her way ! Would she not get the eight hundred pounds his useless life was insured for, and thus be enabled to have what he had never got—a start in life ? This was always in her mind and troubling her peace.

“ Bless us ! what are we accused of—arson or murder, or what not ?” William says, trying to laugh away her fears.

“ Ah, William, you—you know what I

mean. You cannot deceive me. I love my husband too well not to know some of his thoughts. Ah! that dreadful debt that is torturing my poor William!"

"Parker" (the creditor) "has been here and told you about this, Lucy?"

"No, William, nobody, thank God, has asked for money; but some one has been here offering to lend some."

"Was it Short?"

"No, dear; somebody else." And as Lucy sees the look of wonder in his face, she brightens up even in the midst of her distress, and feels the pleasure of being the bearer of good tidings.

"Who then, Lucy?" And as he speaks his face has lost the shadow of care, and assumed that look of surprise which Lucy is rejoiced she is able to call up. It is a relief to her to see the old troubled look gone. "Who in the world can it have been, Lucy?" he repeats.

"You would not guess if you were to try for ever," says Lucy. She tries to make a pleasant episode out of her little secret.

"Let me see," and William entering into

her humour pretends to cogitate. " You will tell me whether it was a man or a woman ? " he coaxes.

" Yes, I will tell you that much. It was a woman ; yes, Sir, a lady—and a young and pretty one, who I am sure thinks very highly of you."

" Then it certainly was not Mrs. Crowley, for she is neither young nor pretty."

" What a guess ! "

" But it wasn't a guess. I didn't name her as the one." And after appearing to cogitate for the orthodox time, which is until the other party is impatient to dissolve the wonder, he gives it up.

" It was Annie. Wasn't it kind of her, and oughtn't we to be thankful for having such a friend ? Ah ! my poor darling, to think that all this misery has been caused by us—by your having us to support !" Lucy says, laying the blame of matrimony being an expensive article upon her own shoulders. This is her own unselfish way. It is the unselfish way of many another affectionate wife as well as Lucy. The *Ego* is absorbed into the *alter* of the husband ; and who

shall say that such a union is not as perfect as may be in this life. Occasionally the *Ego*—one is tempted to believe—is of the masculine instead of the feminine gender, and it is the woman who is paramount in the domestic community, and that not always by force of tongue but by force of mind.

It was Annie then who had come and asked to be allowed to lend money to the proud poor gentleman, in whom she took such an interest! And there is no doubt she was thanked for doing this—thanked, I know, by Chartres in his heart, and in words too by Lucy. Yet Lucy's offended lord wouldn't give in and consent to receive the loan; no, he cheated his wife into the belief that he yet could get a renewal of the bill, and so have another quarter to collect the money. With this Lucy was obliged to rest, and so the day of payment drew near. When the bank should send the usual notice that the bill was overdue, Chartres would call on his creditor; to face him before then he hadn't the moral courage!

He and Short met day by day as usual; but not a word passed either of their lips

about the money matter. So the fatal day came round, and yet the mail brought no protest or other information. Chartres might well be surprised. Another, and a third day passed, and still no letter from the bank arrived. What could be the matter? However, until the warning came Chartres knew he was safe.

A week elapsed; and William and Lucy went to spend the evening at Short's—the evening before the move to the new Grammar-School was made. There was a ball, and a very nice one too, as balls go in Melbourne. Chartres would have been glad enough to stay away. But he went as a kind of duty in order to make friends; for most, if not all of the College committee were to be present, and he wanted to secure their votes for his election to Short's vacated place. There were influential colonists on that committee, as being connected with the leading non-sectarian school of the colony. One of the judges, the then attorney-general, the leading city capitalist, he who gave a thousand a year in support of the Church of England, and other ministers and other men of

position. Well, then, Chartres was to-night to try and secure votes for himself. This was at his wife's instigation. He was not a friend-making man, quite the reverse. His manner to strangers seemed too stand-off, too proud, and try as he might, he couldn't alter them; and he did try too; he was perpetually trying, but still no success in that respect would come. Lucy then persuaded him to go to the ball, and to stay to the very end of it. And he went, although he despaired of success from the first.

"There is no use in talking to them, Lucy, I have no chance. They will put in some man who has a degree, no matter who or what he is; and I can't write B.A. after my name," William said, moodily.

"But try, my dearest William. How can they fail when they know you and see your accomplishments and good sense."

"I'll try, Lucy, if it be only to please you; but as usual I shall fail. I can't succeed in the school line in this country; there are too many graduates who are wandering about the town looking for teachers' places."

"But they don't know how to teach, while you have been doing this for years," said Lucy, hopefully.

"What has that to do with it? Every man of education believes he can teach; and every father thinks the same; and both are content. And so let them remain," William answered, bitterly.

He had not allowed himself from the first to hope much that he would get Short's place. Of course the hope that exists in a man, whether he wills or not, was alive in him; but he never allowed it to brighten him with its influence. "I shall not get the place for the want of B.A. after my name, no matter what my experience or success in teaching is." This was his thought.

Well, the ball came off; and Mr. and Mrs. Chartres were ushered into the crowded room. I declare I should like to describe every article of dress that Lucy wore; but I won't for the sake of my men-readers, who would not relish my efforts. She looked so lovely, so *debonair*, and had withal so much of the young matron about her, that I know she had every eye in the room upon her

beauteous face. And by the way, how attractive to men of all ages a young matron is! Aye, even more attractive to sensible bachelors than "the girls" themselves are. There is something inexpressibly charming in a pretty young woman, the head of a home. When a bachelor—especially if he is on the look out for a wife of his own—sees one, he wonders whether he will ever have a partner like her. She is past her giggling days too; and that is a great deal in her favour, for a woman who can talk sense, is far more sought after than she who can't, or—what is the same to other people—won't.

"Shall I ever be so fortunate as to get such a wife as she is?" was the thought that entered many a young fellow's mind that evening as he looked at Lucy's sweet face, with its lovely clear cut eyes and its modest flushing cheeks, and that ravishing mouth of hers with its little white teeth, which other women used to say must be false, until they had peeped curiously under the wonderful short rosy upper lip, which exposed the whole of the ivory crescent to

view. It required more than one peep by some ladies that night before they would believe that Lucy had not made the purchase of a false set at Moses Aaron Israel's. Aye, and though they were finally obliged to believe, yet some of them would still try to make the men heretics in the doctrine.

Neither Chartres nor his wife danced much that evening, or sang at all, or in fact did anything to bring themselves before the public; and yet Lucy, as usual at balls—very few and mighty far between, seeing this was only her third in the colony—somehow generally had a group of listeners round her, worthy men too, for the women wouldn't or couldn't comprehend her. She made the people wonder, I am sure, at so much wisdom in a small head like hers. I don't think it is very hard to discover in half an hour's conversation with a woman, whether she lives much in the society of her husband. Those who do are usually something like Lucy Chartres in their talk. It was astonishing, I say, to hear the decisive views this young matron possessed on every subject broached; and more astonishing still the arguments she

adduced in support of her views. It was perplexing and pleasing in the highest degree to hear her enunciating opinions on subjects generally thought beyond a woman's ken, and doing so with all the manner of a professor. Women who are trained by men are very definite in their opinions ; most of them, however, are spoiled by this training, though it certainly was not so with Lucy. She was so completely feminine, that no assumption of masculine decision could hurt her. The best part of her conversations used to be when she suddenly recollected how dogmatic she was, and stop talking in order to laugh at herself.

"I declare," she would say, "I deserve to be laughed at when I begin to argue, I am afraid I reason just like a man!" and then she and her audience would laugh again. "It is Mr. Chartres' fault he has spoilt me," she would say with charming self-depreciation. So it is easy to see that she was no blue-stocking. She was simply a good and charming little woman ; and many a man both old and young bade her good-bye that night, and would like to have

said "God bless you" to her as one white-haired old friend actually did.

When a man's mind is on the rack as William Chartres' was this evening, it is not likely to show himself to advantage any more than our hero did. To-night, poor fellow, he had little to say and much to think of ; yet he drew some attention too, as he gravely turned over the music for the singers and players. He was a man to attract attention anywhere. A gentleman even among gentlemen, refinement was stamped in every feature of his grave Mauresque olive-coloured face, shown in every limb, in every attitude, in the very movements of his clothes. People always believed he was more than he claimed to be—a merchant's son. If he had turned out to be a duke of the blood royal it would have surprised nobody, not that there are many dukes in the flesh so refined as he either in manners or appearance ; but the "noble lord" of the general imagination is invariably a splendid being—just such in the ideal as Chartres was in the real. By the way, moreover, Chartres really was a man of the *sangre*

azul; his maternal grandfather was a grandee of the first class in Spain, and although both his English father and grandfather had been only merchants, yet they were the representatives of an old line of country gentlemen—the real “aristos” of England. Poor Chartres as he stood there to-night, hardly claiming equality with the “plebeian upper classes” of a young colony, could show a pedigree on both sides that not eight hundred noblemen or gentlemen in England could boast of. Not, that we think this sort of thing has anything to do with a man’s worth, but it certainly has with his external appearance. Even though he be an ugly man, still blood makes one a gentleman outwardly.

One thing Chartres made by the ball that evening, and that was, the acquaintance of two members of this committee, whom he had not known; so that what with his triumph through his little helpmate, and this extension of his useful acquaintance, he came away a slightly less unhappy man than he had gone. He had drunk some glasses of champagne moreover, and that assisted his beatification a bit.

"Now, are you not glad I made you come?" Lucy triumphantly asked him, as—while walking home—she pressed his arm to her side, after he had spoken of his introduction to the two committee-men. "You are sure to get their votes, I know, and all you will have to do is, to ask for their interest."

William wouldn't spoil this pleasant conceit just now by saying how much he doubted getting either of the votes. He had no intention of going begging for them; but he didn't care to dispirit Lucy by saying so.

"And you dreadful man, how much champagne have you drunk to-night?"

"A good deal, madam!" he said, laughing. "I took in a good stock; for I don't fancy I shall get much more of that sort of nectar for a long time to come."

"Yes, Sir, you will, when we have Short's six hundred pounds a year, with 'your coaching class' as well, we shall often be able to open a bottle of that nice exhilarating liquid—you and I you know, and nobody by!"

"We shall see!" he said in Spanish.

"And taste too! What is the Castilian for that?"

CHAPTER XVII.

As we have already said, the day on which the dreaded bill falls due, comes and goes. How about the notice from the bank? None came on the expected day; nor even three days after. Chartres not knowing what to make of this, screws up his courage to go and pay his creditor a visit.

“He is sure to renew the bill for me!” are his comforting words on leaving his home. “If he won’t, I must only ask Crowley to help me; I’m quite sure he will do it too.” So at twelve o’clock he goes like a frightened schoolboy down towards Elizabeth Street—bless us, how foolish and distressed some men are about their first debts! to face the awful creditor. On the way thither, however, he happens to meet the fearful individual himself; and he positively scans his face as he

approaches him, much in the manner of a criminal scanning the countenance of his judge.

“How do you, Mr. Parker?” Chartres stammers.

“How do you do, Sir? I am glad I have met you!” Parker returns; and Chartres is terrified. “Yes,” he thinks; “he is glad he has met me to give me notice that the bill must be paid, or he will sue for it.”

“Many thanks, Sir, for your orders,” continues Parker insinuatingly; “and I hope you will give me another, and a much larger one, Sir, when you take Mr. Short’s place—Mr. Short was telling me you expected to be elected.”

As Chartres talks with Parker, a thought strikes him. The bank, perhaps, hearing of his prospective rise, has advanced the sixty pounds for him,—that is, rather, fifty-seven pounds; for he had a balance of about three. And here, by the way, I should say that everybody in Australia banks—so it need not be surprising that poor Chartres does so. Yes, everybody banks, gentle and simple, rich and poor—though not the paupers, Mr.

Critic, but people with incomes of as little as two and three hundred a year, which is relatively about the same as one hundred or a hundred and fifty pounds in England.

It is a very comforting thought this, which strikes Chartres, and he inquires: "That bill of mine is all right, Mr. Parker, isn't it?" It is a bold shot.

"Quite right, Mr. Chartres, and thank you," answers Parker, to the instant beatification of his hearer.

Then Chartres rushes off to the bank, and inquires of the manager about the affair; and what does the manager tell him? Why that a week back, the sum of sixty pounds in gold was lodged to the credit of William Salazar Chartres by the hands of John Smith! And to supply all this information to the astounded young man, the manager had to refer to his books.

It is useless to try and depict Chartres' astonishment; his relief too is delicious; and he walks out of the bank a happier man than he has been for many a month past. Yes; he has found that all the world is not against him, as his morbid self-torturing ideas have

of late led him to believe. He knows he has at least one friend on earth, and he is deeply moved. "It is Short who put that sum to my credit," he says to himself; "he is a good fellow and a true friend, and I'll go now and thank him, and beg his pardon for the shameful manner in which I have treated him about this money!" He doesn't feel stiff-necked and proud now, his heart is softened, and his overgrown self-respect has taken her too large body from before his line of vision. And he goes straight off to Short's residence, and catches Philip at an early dinner off the kitchen table, for he is in the act of moving to the new place; and cordially invited, he cordially sits down to eat with those friends who have proved themselves such in the truest sense.

Now as her visitor sits down, Annie gets up from the table and busies herself in a good many ways. Indeed, it is not for some little time, and until the two men have spoken to each other a good deal, that she settles down quietly to finish her dinner. The general servant and the "buttons" are upstairs packing, and the nursemaid is out

with the children, all which throws upon the lady of the house the care of doing the cook's part. Whether she is glad—now Chartres is come—to have this part or not, she herself best knows ; at all events she acts it.

Chartres, we know, has called on a mission of thanking his good friends, so he begins talking suitably to the occasion.

“ ‘Pride, ugly pride !’—what is the end of the lines, Short ? One of the immortal Watts's, you know ;” he remarks, as soon as the inevitable conversation upon the trials of moving are ended.

Short, with his mouth full, doesn't remember what the deuce the words are, or what Chartres means ; and hereupon the latter explains that he wants to recollect the celebrated nursery saying about “ ugly pride always having a tumble.” Annie does remember to have heard the words, but can't recollect them now—she confesses so much.

“ Yes, Master Chartres, you are about the proudest individual I have ever had the honour of knowing ; not, mind you, because you think too much of yourself—for he really doesn't do that, Annie, does he ?—but from

thinking too little of others.” This is really a wonderful remark for Philip to make! It is applicable to so very many so-styled proud men.

“Now, Philip, do stop, and don’t trouble us with your absurd opinions on men and manners,” Annie cries.

“Let him alone, Mrs. Short; I deserve it; I know why he scolds me, and he cannot scold me more than I deserve. I have come here to beg pardon—and be punished if necessary—and to promise to behave better in future.”

“The deuce you have, old fellow! here, let me help you to some of this; it is first-class ‘number two.’ You needn’t go back to the College this afternoon.”

The first-class “number two” is the pet name in Melbourne for pale brandy. More than is good for him is already in Short’s head.

“Indeed, Short, I have to return you a thousand thanks in lodging the money to meet that bill of mine the other day.”

“The money!—what money? Oh, you will condescend, my lord, to take it at last?

Aye ; and thou shalt have it too with a hundred thousand welcomes. And let me tell you, old fellow, between ourselves, that I think you behaved in a deuced unfriendly way with me that time. Your confounded pride, no doubt, took the alarm at something or other I suppose I said—though, mind you, at the present moment, I don't remember much about it. Now that you will take the money, I may tell you I'm devilish glad to be able to do you a helping turn, and I know I can say the same for Annie."

Here Annie moves quickly enough towards the door. But her husband raises his voice as he says the last sentence for her hearing ; and she is obliged to turn round and notice it.

" I'm sure, Philip, it's not worth so much noise as you make about it."

" But, Short ; why did you lodge it in another name—in the name of John Smith ? To keep Chalmers from knowing you were lending me money—was it ?" Now Chalmers was an accountant in the bank which Short and Chartres used, and he was an intimate acquaintance of both men.

" Why did I lodge it in the name of John

Smith?" Short slowly asks, measuring his words one by one; "'pon my honour, I can't see what you mean, Chartres!"

"And you will not be able to see what anyone means, Philip, if you take any more of that brandy to-day—that accrues—not accustomed to it in the daytime," poor Annie remonstrates; she turns off her anathema very well, though Chartres sees through it—turns "accursed" into "accustomed." Her pained look, more than the strong word, impresses him; he knows Short's failing latterly.

"All I know, I tell you; and that is the money to meet that bill was lodged in my bank to my credit, by a John Smith; and I know that John Smith means Philip Short, M.A.; and I beg to return Mr. John Smith many thanks for his kindness."

Short looks from Chartres to his wife, and from his wife to Chartres; and it is certain that the whole thing is a puzzle to him. If he had lodged the money—he says—he would have done so without concealment; but as he really, at last, believed that Chartres could do without the cash, he had no intention in the world to place any funds to his

credit, either openly, or under an assumed name, for a jest's sake, or for any other reason.

"I wonder then who can have lodged the money?" Annie asks, showing much perplexity.

"Why, do you mean to tell me Short, that you did not play me off that agreeable surprise?" Chartres earnestly inquires.

"On my honour, old fellow, I did not. You know just as much about the matter as I do, and seem to know a great deal more."

Chartres considers the affair deeply; and has by no means a pleased expression of countenance; and a dozen of the wildest surmises distract him, while one or two pain him deeply. Those that pain him are thoughts that his wife may have been the means of borrowing this money, that her influence, not his own, has helped him in this bill difficulty; and he fancies now that Lucy, for a week or so before the money had to be paid, had not seemed so anxious as before. He makes nothing of the fact that he had to the last persuaded her that he could easily have more time to pay given him; all his avowals on

this point now go for nothing. Could she have gone to some wealthy acquaintance of his, and borrowed those sixty pounds, and herself lodged it in the bank ? This is what pains him. Whoever lent it, must have done so for her sake, not for his. Whatever man gave it, be he old or young, married or single, bad or good, would have a kind of moral lien over her, and would no doubt talk or boast about it ! To have borrowed that money she must have made a kind of market of her persuasive powers ; and that she did so for her husband's sake, might not alter the fact in the eyes of strangers.

He remembers how completely innocent she must be in the ways of the society in a young colony, with its paths going—as they often do—out of the light and into the shadow. She and he have lived too closely together for much gossiping to have impressed her mind, and in a manner corrupted it. All truth and purity of soul herself, she would never suspect that anyone could misinterpret her acts, much less that they deliberately would do so. Chartres knows all this very well ; and it only makes him the

more anxious. Lucy would, in her very innocence, be likely to do a hundred good things, which might be thought a hundred bad ones. In order that a woman—especially in the colonies—may know how to guard herself, she should be taught to look upon both the light and the dark side of human existence. A man should make it a part of the business of his life to show his wife that side of human nature which she of herself cannot see ; so that by knowing where the treacherous ground is, she may learn to tread securely.

If the lender of the money had seen the borrower's face at that time, he would by no means have believed that he had done anything for which he was thanked.

"Well, it's all a puzzle ; isn't it, Chartres ? But at all events, you ought to be decidedly obliged to whoever paid in the money!" Short says.

"And, of course, Mr. Chartres is obliged, Philip !" Annie says ; and then she asks William : " You are, Mr. Chartres, are you not ?"

" I suppose I ought to be !" Chartres

answers, getting up from his chair and taking his hat ; then he goes away home.

Short turns slowly round in his seat—turns towards his wife, who busies herself at the kitchen dresser. “He supposes he ought to be, Annie ! What do you say to that ?”

Sullenly and shortly enough speaks Annie. “It is a pity he is so proud ; no one *can* like him much.”

“ He—he’s a dam fool ; that’s what I say !” Philip says ; and then he looks affectionately towards the brandy decanter. “ I positively must take another drop of ‘ *number two* ’ to keep myself from being angry—disgusted with the fellow !” poor Philip says, smiling blandly towards his wife’s back.

So he drinks his brandy, and by-and-by falls asleep on a sofa cushion on the drawing-room floor. And Annie goes into the next room—and what ? Why has a comfortable little cry all to herself. When she comes out she sees that her fine-looking husband has his head pillowless ; so she raises it with a cushion, for she is afraid of his getting apoplexy, since an acquaintance of hers died in a fit when he was intoxicated. She looks

at Philip's fine Herculean form and handsome face, stoops down and kisses his forehead.

"O, Philip, poor Philip, would to God, for the sake of both of us, it were otherwise!"

Then she goes steadily about her work.

Chartres walks straight home to his wife to ask her whether she has borrowed that money for him. If she has—he keeps thinking on his way home—"if she has, it will bring matters to a crisis just the same as if the bill hadn't been met." He is quite sure that he will make every effort to raise that cash and return it to the lender before tomorrow's sun has set. If necessary, he will sell his watch and the best of the furniture to get the funds. But all his impatient and hasty thoughts go for nothing—as he finds before he has been five minutes in his house. Lucy has not borrowed the money, and is as much surprised as he had been when he tells her about the matter. She, however, doesn't seem at any great loss to name the money-lender.

From the first—after she has learned that Short denied knowing anything about it—she holds that Annie is the lender. It is she and no other, for a thousand reasons which she asserts, and in time Chartres believes the same. He is glad to think it was she, moreover; for his dignity would not be offended, in this event, and it proved that Annie thinks a good deal of himself and his family, which gratified his self-esteem. He determines at first to get Lucy to ask Annie whether she really is the person who had so befriended him; but on second thoughts he considers it would be better to say nothing for the present. “We will let her know we suspect her,” he says to Lucy, “and when her own time comes to tell her secret out, she will tell it. She is a good noble-hearted creature, and I trust for her sake that poor Short may be saved before it is too late. Before I left his house he was quite gone in liquor—at two o’clock in the afternoon!”

“Ah! William, if you had but half his good fortune.”

“My darling, I am better satisfied with my lot at the present moment than—I think

—I have been since you came out to the colony."

"How rejoiced it makes me, William, to hear you say that," says Lucy, fondly.

"Heaven knows it is not because I am crowing over poor Short, and elevating myself in my own opinion because he is becoming—with all his good fortune—low in our estimation," Chartres said seriously.

But it is just that very mental crowing over his friend that does make the speaker happier at that moment. He is only a mortal man, though a good fellow enough, and mortal men are fonder of crowing than cocks, either fowl or pheasant, are. Our hero is a bit of a philosopher, a mixture of all the sects, and like them all he can sometimes deceive himself; though, mind you, for a wonder, not often.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PHILIP SHORT made his move to his new school, and his old place knew him no more. The New College, as his building was called, was one of the finest pieces of architecture about Melbourne. It was in the suburbs on a line of railway about three miles from town. I am almost afraid to say how much it cost; but the fact is that those things are done nobly in Australia, and, moreover, if there be one thing more than another which the colonists lavish their money upon, it is on education and places for it. The larger share of the building expenses was subscribed by the Melbourne folk, and the balance amounting to three or four thousand pounds, was given by government.

Short was a very lucky fellow there is no doubt, to get his new appointment as prin-

cipal to this establishment, lucky because in the first place there were such a large number of applicants for the berth, and secondly because the colonists have an ugly trick of passing over even good colonial men and things for indifferent English ones. His fixed salary was seven hundred and fifty pounds a year, and of course he had the right of taking boarders, whose numbers it was judged would amount to at least a hundred ; the lowest charge for any of whom would be sixty pounds a year, and the highest about a hundred guineas. Here was a place (for a young fellow of two and thirty), which in a few years would assuredly under good management bring in a fortune.

The lucky Short was envied by all the University men teaching in the colony, and he naturally blessed his propitious stars. There was no college furniture found beyond the necessary desks. So the first thing, after his appointment, the new principal did, was to raise money upon Annie's property in Sydney—two thousand pounds, to furnish the dormitories in a far superior style to those of Eton or Harrow, and to fit up his

own private apartments much in the style of a nobleman's in England. People really do know how to spend money in Australia; and Short was at the head of spending people. There is little use in describing how a large sum of money was expended upon the furniture which was bought for the new residence. Suffice it to say, that everything which money could buy in the colony was purchased. Twelve hundred pounds must have been spent in this way.

The Shorts having been—on their former income—able to help to lead the fashions, now seemed bent upon altogether eclipsing all other Melbourne "uppers;" and there is no doubt the young couple made an excellent beginning. On seven or eight hundred pounds a year in Victoria a married couple, having a very small family and practising rigid economy in household matters, may dress well and put in a proper number of appearances before the public. But now the Shorts' seven hundred pounds is become double that amount, they might try "leading living" in all its varieties; and so they did. If Annie was a woman of sense, as she is des-

cribed, how is it that she consented to all this extravagance? Well, the truth is, that she not only consented to it but liked it as well. From her childhood she had been accustomed to dress as she wished in respect of expense. A hundred a year more or less was nothing to her wealthy father, and on her return home to Sydney from England and France, she took up her position as leading toilette-shower in the city, by virtue of her continental experiences. As a single woman she had been fond of finery, and now as matron she was even fonder. When I say finery, however, I do not mean gaudy things. Annie was a tasteful girl; if she had been a resident of Paris or Madrid instead of Melbourne, she would have led the fashions in the one place as well as in the other.

No doubt the English reader will at first find some difficulty in understanding how a simple teacher and his wife could take upon themselves to give any sort of law whatever to the people of a large and wealthy city, anywhere out of America. But it must be understood, that although people are not all equal in social standing in Australia, there

is in that country no class of people which leads by right of birth. There is no aristocracy in the southern hemisphere, at least nothing at all like that of England. When colonists talk of the upper classes they generally mean the wealthy people, and yet not altogether those either, but rather men who have money and what in ordinary parlance is styled respectability as well. For instance, no entirely uneducated peasant, however wealthy, would be considered an "upper." But if he had some education—could read and write for instance—with his money he might claim a good position and have his claim allowed. Professional men—even country lawyers—who in England are styled gentlemen only by courtesy, would at once take their position among the highest classes in the colony. Of necessity, no class exists in Australia like the "west-enders" in England. In Victoria there live no gentlemen—"owning land"—who refuse to mix with other gentlemen of means, because the latter have to use their brains for a livelihood. And ever may Australia want those men. Indeed in England alone do they now exist,

the United Kingdom is their last stronghold, and may they live and die in peace there.

Annie Short, whose elegant figure and pretty face alone would anywhere entitle her to be the leader of a clique, was now—her means being ample—without a dissentient voice, considered the arbitress of female fashion in Melbourne. She and Philip had always been necessary accessories in every ball-room, and now they were sought more than ever. The Governor's wife and daughters who ought to have given the cue to the women of Victoria, took—it was well known—their own cue from Mrs. Short. As to Philip, he too did his share among the men at the Melbourne club.

Annie was pleased in exhibiting her large handsome lord to the public. It was indeed one of the few pleasures he afforded her. Philip, too, took great delight in showing his elegant and ladylike spouse about. Going to the band at the Botanic and Fitzroy Gardens was a favourite pastime of theirs. I don't think that on an average they went less than fifty times in the year to one of the theatres, and at least half that number

of times to concert-rooms, and other public and fashionable resorts. Balls—as I have elsewhere said—they were necessary to, the balls of the upper classes. And on the two great occasions of the Governor's and the Mayor's fancy balls, they invariably showed to great advantage. Yet Annie preferred the theatre and concerts to the ballroom; because in the former places she could sit and look, and above all, be looked at without the effort of conversing much; whereas she couldn't do this among a roomful of friends.

Did this fashion-leading and “gadding about”—as it would be irreverently termed by the good in their own opinion—did it do them much harm in a professional point of view? They became, soon after going to the college, the temporary parents of more than eighty young Australians, varying in age from eight to sixteen, and in position from the sons of market-gardeners and waggoners to those of millionaires, knights, judges of the land, and parliamentary ministers. Annie was then *pro tempore* the mother of a great family, and in England,

would be supposed to have a tremendously heavy care on her mind. Well, I don't know much about all this. I only say what Annie herself had foreknown, namely that her fashion-leading did her no pecuniary hurt—none whatever. On the contrary, she believed that it brought her more pupils; and others were soon of the same opinion. The women in Australia are not expected—if they have the money to pay servants—to be the arrant slaves to their homes which the middle-class women of England are and prefer to be.

Now, looking at the material prosperity of this young couple, ought they not to have been happy? They had youth, beauty, a small family, ample means on their side; and one would fancy that it would have been likely for them to be among the happiest of mortals in that land of happy people—Australia. But they were by no means content. Annie was so now, no more than she had been before. Her husband loved her very much, and here was a material of real value for the creation of an all-satisfying heart-pleasure. But as the wife could not—

and once she had tried very hard to do it—return this love of her husband's, the material lay waste before her.

She didn't actually dislike Philip, far from it. She was merely neutral as far as love was concerned. He had never filled that often-mentioned void in her heart, although, before her marriage she thought he had. Short was not a man to be loved by women. A great many would have disliked him as a husband. But distasteful and utterly wearisome as his fidgetty habits were to his undemonstrative wife, yet because of the real affection he bore her, and through the influences of his untiring kindness towards her she was kept from actually disliking him. It often made herself wonder how, try as she might, she never could bring herself to love him as she knew other women loved their husbands; for, put his defects into words, all she could accuse him of was being fidgetty; and she could not bear to think that such a simple adjective as that could have such a tremendously repelling effect as it really had.

Sometimes she had accused herself of heart-

lessness and inability to love, as others of her sex did. But that was past now. When she knew what the Chartreses were, she also knew that she too could have loved deeply. Having no home for the affection of her heart, she cared little for that of her body ; and thus she was fond of the excitements to be had by going into society. True, she loved her two children ; but she was one to whom the pleasures of maternity alone were not all-sufficient All commonplace women, I fancy, with commonplace husbands think much more of their children than their spouses. They follow the strong feminine instinct which makes a mother's affection for her offspring paramount. But Annie seemed more fitted to be the companion of a man than that of children ; most women of intellect are like her ; and yet they can be the fondest of wives, and the fondest of mothers at the same time.

Now, I think I have endeavoured to show —somewhat vaguely, but so far truthfully—the reason for Annie Short's life being far from a happy one. True, she had no active cause for misery, at least before Philip turned

to drinking ; but on the other hand, she had no active cause for being happy ; and now as a wife she could never hope to have any of those thousand and one little pleasures which in a single woman can make up the sum of a very pleasant existence. This alone was enough to keep many a smile from her face.

If Philip could but change—If—But how could this be ? What fire could purify him from that dross which made him so unloveable as a husband ? He had never known real care. Could the fiery furnace of Trouble alter him ?

CHAPTER XIX.

THE election the issue of which is to influence the after-life of Chartres and his family more than any other event, comes off at four o'clock this day, the second of October, eighteen hundred and ——. Very different are, and have for some time been the feelings with which Chartres and his wife regard its ending. Lucy would persist in arranging the opinion of the ten committee-men beforehand. They were of necessity to vote for her deserving husband. As a junior master, he hitherto had shown how well and how faithfully he could perform his difficult duties, how quiet and sober and gentlemanlike he was, and with what unerring regularity he had always attended to his duties. The sobriety and, next to that, the regularity in

work, being, as it really is in Australia, of paramount importance. Yes ; she argued that the committee must choose the proved man—the one tested by themselves—before any other man tested only by his “testimonials.”

It would be difficult to say why in this particular instance she should hope so persistently. Possibly because she feared to look at the effect which she well knew a failure would have on William’s mind. As for Chartres himself, he never varied, at least in words, from the position he had at first assumed, which was that he had no chance whatever of such an extreme piece of good fortune as six hundred a year coming to him. He never allowed any words of hope to escape his lips ; and yet he perforce had some in his heart—some ; but very little. For months past he had allowed himself, or what is much more likely, he couldn’t help it, to regard his prospects with bitter contempt, and in fact to look upon himself as a man fated to be unfortunate for ever.

The candidate, whose wife was so sure of

success, hated above everything in this world except a vain man, which he disliked almost as bitterly as a sensible woman can—hated “touting.”

“Now, young man!” said the grocer, whose vote Abernethy, the young surgeon, had solicited, “now I have promised you my influence, I trust you will perform your duties well,” &c. &c. “Here, you fellow, give me a pennyworth of figs, and be hanged to you; make haste!” is the somewhat astounding reply of the great operator. He wasn’t born to be a touter assuredly. How glad Chartres would have felt had he been able to imitate him! but a poor man can’t afford himself the gratification of quarrelling. It is a luxury, and like all other luxuries, can’t be afforded by everybody.

Chartres, however, as he could not act like Abernethy, determined to do the next best thing in touting, to go only to those places where he felt secure of a favourable reception. When he folded up his application to the school-committee, and had enclosed his few though excellent testimonials, he said, “Now

I have done all I can decidedly do. I know I am well worth the appointment, and that I shall be more successful with my pupils at the examinations than Short has been ; for the simple reason that I shall work harder than he did. I shall not go round to strangers begging their votes." He said this and meant it when he spoke ; but afterwards, the thought of his wife and children made him act in a more business-like manner, and he determined to call on a good many of the committee. This was for him a great concession ; for he believed himself entitled to the situation, as he was the longest resident professor in the college, after Short and the Principal.

The first individual whom he would officially speak to was the head-master. So he went up and made his obedience, and did his touting ; and how do you think he was received ? Why, exactly as the successful grocer received Abernethy ! worse, too ; for the grocer did promise the young man his vote, but the other fellow only said he would see about—consider in fact—and, in fact, do

as it was in fact his imperative duty in his public, and he might say in his very important position, in fact as head or principal leader of the Educational Element of Victoria. He would consider deeply and dispassionately all the claims of the candidates, and, in fact, he would accordingly advise the committee. By the way, he had no vote ; but his advice was usually asked, and always followed. This was the success Chartres had in his first tout-ing encounter ! And do you think he tried soliciting influence again ? Never. Chartres and Lucy had depended more on “Principal Garrison’s” friendly influence than on all the rest of the committee put together ; and they had leaned on a broken reed.

William—rightfully or not—had depended upon Garrison’s using all his influence in his favour. He considered himself entitled to such a kindness in return for a thousand little services rendered. Much as he disliked “clerking,” he had generally helped Garrison to make up the voluminous school accounts. Indeed, after he had done so for the first time, the Principal used to make it a point of ever after asking his assistance. These little

friendlinesses were capped by others in the shape of affording opportunities for frequent holidays, which Garrison would never have ventured to take for himself, if Chartres had not worked in his place, and hard too. William was a good disciplinarian—not from the use of physical so much as mental power ; he was a far better ruler of numbers than the Principal himself, and everybody in the college knew this. Now, when Garrison wanted an idle day to himself, he had only to ask Chartres to take charge for him, and the school was always as safe from uproar and complaint as if the chief himself were present. These times were great trials to Chartres, who, as a mere assistant-teacher, was not so much feared as his chief, and he consequently had so much the greater efforts to make in keeping order. Not one of these Garrison holidays passed, in which Lucy's smelling-bottle and her light hands were not in requisition for an hour or two after four o'clock, bathing her husband's aching head—aching from severe mental exertion. Garrison latterly had tasked hard his friend's good-nature ; and was it unreasonable that he should be

expected to make some return? Any other of Chartres' friends would have been glad of an opportunity to do as Garrison should have done. But then Alexander was a martyr to justice ; and he did what other self-considered martyrs to duty often do—served himself.

Mr. Crowley worked hard for his friend ; and Crowley's son, the lawyer, also worked. They both did so unsolicited ; and the latter actually got a promise of two votes. Short got the promise of two more ; this made four, if the promises were performed ; so that if Garrison had done the right asked for as a favour, Chartres would have become a successful man, and this book about him would never have been written.

And now I have said more than I began this chapter with the intention of saying ; for I have let the cat out of the bag. Yes ; poor Chartres missed the six hundred a year, and a well known gentleman got it—well known about the principal public-houses in Melbourne. He knew nothing of class-teaching either, having vegetated for a couple of years past, since his landing, by casual private tuition. But he was a wrangler and a prizeman,

and his acquirements, which were really great, were all that people considered. Who ever inquires about a teacher's aptitude for his work ? This gentleman then, was the guide, philosopher and friend whom Principal Garrison considered it his duty to recommend for a couple of hundred youths. But then, wasn't he his cousin ; or, at all events, his wife's ; and hadn't he agreed to give an honorarium of half his first year's salary to his cousin's husband ? And wasn't all this whispered about town before many weeks passed over ? Yes ; Chartres never wished worse to Garrison than soon happened to him, through this very cousin too.

CHAPTER XX.

I PROCEEDED then about Chartres still, after his cruel rebuff, poor fellow—for it was a bitterly cruel one to him, pretend as he might to feel indifference, and to not having expected the appointment. Yes ; it was a terrible blow to him and his poor little wife and his blind father. It may be easily understood that henceforth Garrison's college was no place for William Chartres. He determined to resign both his place in it, and in the scholastic profession as well. Without his degree of B.A., he saw clearly now that he had no decent prospect of obtaining any of the good things going in the teaching line in the colony. He now had proved what long since he had known, that people never ask about anything else in a teacher than his mere book-learning ; and men of high attainments from

all European Universities are, in Australia, as plentiful as leaves in autumn.

After his cruel rebuff, Chartres threw up his place at the college. And what do you think he determined to do? Go gold-digging. Yes; he saw no other prospect of making any money. A bare livelihood, such an one as he had up to now earned, might still, no doubt—with a great deal of care and touting, and self-glorification in prospectuses, and in the newspapers,—be made by setting up a school of his own, whose income added to that of Lucy's little academy, would just allow him and his family to exist as heretofore. But he would have none of this sort of thing any longer. Now that he had ventured on that—which to one who has a family dependent on him, is a terrible path, whose end is not visible; in plain prose, now that he had thrown up his situation without previously securing another, he determined on trying something which might bring him in a fortune; and if not exactly that, still a few hundred pounds with which he might buy a few acres of good land, and plant eight or ten acres of vines, and set up a home

for himself, and have enough money over to live upon, while his plants were growing. On the diggings, a good patch of land—in official language, a good claim—would do all this for him, and for those far dearer to him than himself, which latter individual he didn't love by any means overmuch. Indeed, by this time, he valued his life as a means of doing good for his wife and family, and not—as is usual among men—as a means of doing pleasure to himself.

He had already tried digging, and that was, as will be recollected, when he first came to Australia; so he knew all the pains and penalties attached to gold-hunting. To the question often asked by friends, “Do you think you will be able to stand the hard work?” His answer was “of course,” and that he was quite certain he could. And yet he had his doubts on the matter—his private ones. But on the other hand, he persuaded himself that he could force his strength for a few months at least, that he wouldn't allow himself to break down under half a year at all events; and by that time, if he wasn't marked out by Providence for ruin, he would

make enough to hire assistance, or to buy a share in a quartz-reef, or become part-owner of a good "crushing-mill," or "puddling-machine," or something or other at which he needn't have to work like a slave, half in the water and half out.

It is a general remark among diggers, that five or six years' actual mining knocks a man up for ever. I don't mean that it makes him a permanent invalid ; but it leaves him liable to disease, especially that curse of the gold-fields—rheumatism.

Now the poor little woman who was to stay at home and not to have the privilege of sharing her husband's discomforts, had often heard from his own lips this terrible fate in store for the digger. But what could she do ? She wasn't a woman to sit down all day crying and wringing her hands when there was any work to be done—disheartening a man, as so many women do just at the time when their encouragement may be so valuable. No ; like a sensible girl as she was—and she became a better husband-adviser every day—she saw that this accursed diggers' rheumatism was, in

ninety-nine cases in a hundred, brought on by lying on the wet ground ; and she went to the druggist and bought a few yards of india-rubber tissue, and fastening the edges together by heat she sewed it between two blankets and made her husband a wrapper, which he safely might, and actually often did lie on in a puddle of water, as dry and as comfortable as if wet was unknown. She got some more tissue too—it ought to be styled life-preserving tissue—and sewed it between two sheets to protect it, and gave William a tarpaulin which weighed only a few ounces, but which, hung over a bush made as good a roof as any iron one.

Chartres, like a good many new hands at mining, had a great idea of “prospecting,” which is going about searching for new gold-bearing ground ; and his thoughtful helpmate knew that a man after wandering about the first half of the day, and digging hard the remaining half was not always either willing or able to travel back several miles to his tent. So she gave him his light tarpaulin and his waterproof blanket to preserve him from the damp, and I declare

many a time has he put the former on the ground when he has been thoroughly exhausted after a hard day's work, and raising the edges all round by placing stones or pieces of timber under them, and wrapping himself in his blanket, found himself almost floating in water in the morning. Only the water has been at the other side of his tarpaulin! How often he blessed the thoughtfulness of his dear little wife.

Just about this time the gold fields in the great Australian Alps were discovered ; and everybody's head was full of the fortunes which were to be made there, not alone by working with the pick and shovel, but by taking shares in any of the hundred and one new reefing companies, which those old stagers, the sharebrokers, conjured into existence. Well, Chartres made up his mind to go off as a working digger to the mountains. The new track, called the Yarra-track had just been surveyed ; and by this route the diggings were brought to within four or five days' foot journey to Melbourne. Our new digger manfully determined to travel on foot, so as to train himself for his

future labours. He was to go alone too ; for he knew nobody in the digging line, barring the manager of a “crushing” company, and he of course was an aristocrat compared with the mere alluvial fossicking miner.

And now we come to the good friend Crowley’s share in the matter. As a landlord, and an intimate friend too, Crowley was very well acquainted with Chartres’ pecuniary affairs. He had strongly advised him not to throw up his situation at the College ; any sensible man would have done the same. But when the mischief was done, he incited nobody to groan over it ; and now as an old digger himself he was able to give his friend many valuable “wrinkles.” It was Lucy’s intention to move to a cheaper and of course inferior house, when her husband left. But Mr. Crowley would not “hear on it, my dear,” said he to William, “never mind the few pound due, my lad. You’ll pay me that, and what will be owing too, when you drop on a golden hole.”

Chartres explained that he meant to pay

up the present arrears before he started, so as not to leave debt behind him.

"Don't you mind the few pound, Sir. You'll want every penny you can spare for yourself, and your good lady will need some too while you're away," Crowley said all this very gently, almost indeed in a whispered reverie.

"But I'm afraid we can't afford fifteen shillings a week for rent now."

Then a roaring voice, accompanied by a bright smile and a clap on the shoulder, cried, "Now! what's 'now' my lad? It's what you can afford by-and-by! Never say die, my lad, that's my motter!" and Crowley relapsed into silence for awhile, after which he suddenly took his friend by the arm and led him into the garden. Crowley junior, the lawyer, followed.

The father used to call the son John, Johnny, and Jack indiscriminately. But I will style him by his baptismal name John. John Crowley then was now in his two-and-thirtieth year, and enjoyed the very best of health and spirits; and was admitted in the colony of Victoria, as one of her

Majesty's honourable attorneys at law. He had a senior partner in business to whom his father, four years ago, gave a thousand pounds for a share in a good *clientèle*, and his partner and he were now at the top of their profession, making a nett income of about three thousand a year—rather over than under. John Crowley, Esq., so styled by Act of Parliament, did not live with his respected parents. He boarded in a fine house near the aristocratic Fitzroy Gardens, Melbourne, with three other well-to-do men, and he paid his landlady four pounds a week for his accommodation. He and his partner had their offices in Collins Street, where he went every morning by car for sixpence.

He was a rather tall slim man about five feet eleven in his socks; and pretty well formed as to limbs. He wore his beard but not his moustache, and from this circumstance one would be inclined to take him for a Scot, of the artizan or small tradesman class. One can never fail knowing a north-countryman, a Scot, or a sailor, by his wearing all the hair on his face except the moustache. John

Crowley, as we already know, was the eldest son of his parents ; and the prospective heir of all his father's property, or rather nearly all—for his younger brother, now a boy, is, when old enough, to be sent up country, where his father will set him up with forty or fifty square miles of land, and ten thousand sheep. Not a bad prospect for a working bricklayer's son.

John had been kept at school from the time he was seven until he was sixteen years old. He had attended a government "Common (to all religions) School" with punctuality ; and he left it rather better educated, as regards reading, writing, arithmetic, geography and grammar, (theoretical) than most of the lads who leave Harrow or Eton to enter the University.

His father and mother were passionately fond of him ; they looked upon Johnny as the hope of the family. Through him it was that the heretofore peasant Crowleys were to be lifted into the rank of gentlefolk ; and he was held in somewhat awesome estimation accordingly. It must be recollectcd that the old folk could hardly write their names ; and

finding themselves the owners of a son who could read well, talk Latin, do Algebra, sing hymns from the music, and was one of the sharpest lawyers in the colony ; finding themselves the owners, I say, of such a fine son as he, could they have been otherwise than proud of him ?

As to what may be styled his morals, he may indeed be said not to have had any. For him nothing and nobody was too sacred. He remained a bachelor because he—like many other men—was distrustful of the women Great Britain sends out to her colonies. He was distrustful of every feminine virtue in fact, and in this regard he really was worse than most other men ; for whereas they can respect the woman who respects herself, Crowley believed in no woman at all. “A frightful state of mind !” you will exclaim ; but for all that it is one but too common in Australia. About his affections, however, there was one redeeming quality, he returned, in his way, the passionate love of his father and mother ; and he was kindhearted too, to a fault. In spite of his sometimes “ chaffing ” his father,

by using big words, he really liked him much ; and was never known to be ashamed of his "old dad," as so many other men in his position would have been. All things considered he was a good and affectionate son, and, in fact, the old folks were the only people on earth he both loved and respected.

This is John Crowley, the man who hereafter will have so much to do with William Chartres.

CHAPTER XXI.

OLD CROWLEY was a good kindhearted fellow now, as he had hitherto proved to the Chartreses. In the matter of the house-rent due, he insisted on having his own way. He wouldn't hear of taking a penny from the would-be digger, and on the contrary, at the last moment, he even offered to lend him some money—pressed him to take it; which Chartres however didn't.

"I don't indeed want it just now, Mr. Crowley, though I thank you quite as much as if I did take it. It is just possible though that if I meet with misfortune or get ill—"

—"I see what you mean, lad. And if you do, why the missus and the children always knows where to find a welcome until something turns up. Leave 'em to Johnny and me. They shall never want while we have

a bit and a sup, and they'll be in as safe hands as your own. Only you keep up a strong heart, and don't let a bit of misfortune break you down as it has many a fine young gentleman like yourself, that I can remember on the diggings."

Chartres was truly grateful to this unpolished good friend. And ought he not to have been so? How few people in the world are like these good folk? He had hitherto come across no others of their kind at all events.

And now we start the adventurer fairly on his way. I won't describe any of his parting conversations with his little family. Sufficient to say he crept out of his house one morning before sunrise, cruelly enough too, but in order to be kind, leaving his wife and children all fast asleep, the former overcome with her anxiety and watchfulness. She determined to have sat up all the last night in order to give him with her own hands his last meal in the house, and all the paraphernalia of the breakfast was ready on the table. But about two o'clock in the night she lay down on the bed dressed as she

was and exhausted ; she was not long awake after that. When the sun awoke her, the house was without its master, and the poor thing cried bitterly enough at the discovery.

Here I may say what I have already alluded to in my preface, or rather what I intend to allude to for I haven't written the preface yet. In most novels, the good and deserving personages are made happy by those *Ultima Thules* of romancers—marriage or emigration. When a man sets sail from England he is supposed to have left dull care behind him. In his new home all is to be as bright as heaven itself, and he is no longer to be subject to the commonplace calamities of life. How real this picture is we, who have been emigrants, know ! You and I, Sir, when we were gallantly ploughing the mouth of the Mersey or Thames in smooth water had our visions all of the rosy kind. We were henceforth to know no trouble, to be strangers to the heart-ache. Wasn't—failing our making a speedy fortune by speculation—wasn't, I say, that nice little farm, plus the ten acre vineyard, plus the bark hut of two rooms and a leafy verandah,

was not that to be enough to satisfy us for the rest of our lives? Nay; were we not to live as happily as men and their spouses could live, leading the Arcadian life of shepherds in a hut in the far interior of Australia, and with our horses to ride and our cows to milk, our orangery and our irrigated garden-plot? Alas! how true that saying of the Roman was and is, "No man by changing his climate can alter his mind"—*Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.* How soon men find that care and trouble are as common south of the equator as north. You and I protest warmly against that trick of the novelist who makes emigration the panacea for every disorder. You and I know that people at home in Europe hear much and talk more about the successful traveller only, while all the unsuccessful beings are forgotten. But they do not forget themselves. They do not live in mother-of-pearl caverns at the antipodes, or else there wouldn't be so many suicides every year for the southern coroners to sit upon.

Lucy cried more, and felt more bitter grief that sad morning when her dear husband

left her than she did—before she had colonial experiences—the day William parted from her to go sixteen thousand miles away. At the last-mentioned parting, that lovely rose-colour, which we have spoken of, tinted all her visions ; now she saw things in their natural hues. There was no glamour in the word Australia to make her feel any the less pain at affliction than a woman in Europe would feel.

The poor girl didn't eat much breakfast that morning, I promise you ; she could see her dear husband—Oh, how the female mind can realize !—her handsome, well-bred, gentlemanly husband dressed in his coarse garments, plodding wearily along the dusty mountain track under the burning sun. She could feel the aching neck and shoulders carrying the heavy burden ; she could realise the swelling, blistering feet ; and above all this she could experience that “dragging at each remove a lengthening chain,” which her husband himself felt so much. As is usual with the sufferer at home, she felt more than the sufferer away from home. Yes ; thus it is that an affectionate woman, from

her extraordinary power of realizing the pains of those she loves, can “weep with us tear for tear,” as so few men can.

And here we leave her, to count the hours until she gets a letter from William, and to brood over all her own and his many troubles.

Chartres stole out of the house in the balmy morning air, and striding along with his best leg foremost, got out of town before many people were astir. Have you ever carried a “swag?” But I need hardly ask such a question to the untravelled novel-peruser. You never have then, except you have been on the Alps, and then you only know what a bundle is in the cold weather. Chartres soon began to know what a load is, when carried on a man’s shoulders under a burning sun. He had accepted a pickaxe which Crowley had used years ago, and he now had it on his back; he had, moreover, his tarpaulin and blankets to carry, about eight pounds of provisions too; and he actually had more than six pounds weight of books as well. Then there were his spare clothing, half a pound of tobacco, knife

and fork, pannikin, tin-pot, muffler, tooth, hair, and nail brushes ! All these articles came to about forty-five pounds. His wife had asked him to take a small tent also ; but he had sufficient sense not to do so.

Well, he walked bravely along until he cleared the town, somewhat less bravely onward after the sun got up a bit, and then—aye, then ? The truth is, that then—that is at nine o'clock, his shoulder and neck-aches became so acute as to be unbearable ; so he sat down and rested. It was rather a long rest too of nearly three hours ; but his aches did not get well sooner. Then he started again ; but before he walked two miles his pain became insupportable again ; so he regularly jibbed, as they say of the horses.

It was fortunate for him that he had not—before he broke down—turned off the main road to that one on which he would have met no wagons, or he would have been obliged to leave his cherished goods to the kangaroos. The last time he sat down he placed himself on the roadside, where he could see and be seen, and making up every thing except one tarpaulin, a knife, comb, some bread, meat,

tea, and sugar, into a bundle, he put them on a passing wagon, receiving the name of a storekeeper on the diggings, with whom they would be left. Then he got up, a new man, and did his fifteen miles without fatigue. The first half-dozen miles always brings a "swagman" to his senses ; and Chartres regretted that he had brought more provisions than would last him for a couple of days. Every ounce of weight is considered by the tired man. When he got off the main road, he found there was no road over the mountains but a bridle-track to the diggings ; for the new gold-fields were in the ranges, and having then been discovered but a short time, the engineers were only now finishing the survey of a new road—a short cut from Melbourne to the place. But civilization and public-houses show themselves even before cart-roads ; and when Chartres came up with the new track survey party he learned that he could make a "shanty" by sundown, which he did.

The sun was just going down behind the hills he had crossed ; and as he stood on a rising ground he heard the welcome bark of

a dog in the valley, or rather the gully below him. Tired men are not given to the contemplation of nature ; but Chartres could not help stopping on this hill and looking round him. The sun was sinking in the west ; the cool and perfumed air of an Australian evening was—as it always is after a hot day—exquisitely delicious. Round him there was not, in this loveliest portion of Victoria, the prevailing Australian leaden-coloured foliage and red earth to look at. Here all the soil was like that of cultivated Europe—black ; and, moreover, it was as rich as—aye, and richer than—the mould of a hot-house in a gentleman's garden. The vegetation was of the loveliest description. Myrtle trees, upwards of two hundred feet high, covered with white or *red* blossoms ; sassafras trees with their laurel-like leaves, and sixty feet stems ; vines and lianas swinging from tree to tree, like ropes ; the tree-ferns like artificial ornaments ; and beauteous birds singing their evening songs among the shining green foliage. To the right lay the mighty plains below, with their rivers passing through them like curved chalk lines on a billiard board.

On his left rose the granitic mountains higher and higher like steps, until here and there, particularly in the distant front, their tops mingled with the eastern bluish clouds, and in one or two places showed their snowy summits far up in the heavens.

This was the first time to his knowledge—for he had, of course, as an infant, seen the Spanish mountains—that Chartres had been among the hills, and he was entranced with their beauty. The sun soon sank however, and he had to push on. By-and-by the dog barked again, this time answered by a chorus, which sounded almost like music on the dense evening air. He looked well around as he gained another treeless eminence—one can't see much as our arm-chair travellers often forget among timber—and he saw, as it were below his feet on the side of the hill, the blue smoke of a camping place finding its way heavenwards. A little farther on, he heard people laughing ; and in a few minutes' downward climb, he came to a slab-hut, before which three or four horses were fastened, whose masters were enjoying themselves indoors. Yes ; the silence of the primeval

forest outside the door, and the highest refreshments of civilization—which we take to be distilled spirits and gaseous liquors—within! It was a regular rough-and-tumble legalised “shanty.” There was no garden near it, which there usually is in most places of any stability.

This place of accommodation had been put up about a fortnight ; and three weeks back the whole concern from bark-roof to slab-chimneys was growing timber. Even the handsaw didn’t come into use in its erection. A cross-cut, a mall, and wedges and tomahawk, were its implements which fashioned the structure. The counter and what shelving there was, were made of old pine wood gin cases, and it certainly did boast of a couple of pine tables and American chairs. It was a thorough sample of the by-road and bush public-house. I say by-road ; for let me tell my Australian novelists who talk about bowie-knives and red shirts in the fashionable parts of Sydney and Melbourne, that the ordinary hotel of the Australias, be it even three hundred miles from the sea-coast, is generally as comfortably, if not as

showily furnished as its cogener in the country parts of England. In the interior, it often costs as much to buy the furniture of an hotel as it does in Europe to build one.

There were five men in the shanty, besides the landlord and his helping man. The owner was a quondam digger, who had a taste for seeing company ; and with a few hundreds saved in the brilliant old golden days, he had become a Boniface. Three of his company were “reefers,” or substantial men, who worked a quartz-reef by machinery, and each of them had his few hundreds in the banks. Two of the other visitors were shepherds from the neighbouring station, about fifteen miles off. The odd-man, hostler, helper, or whatever else you choose to style him, was a gray-headed, bibulous individual, who, when he had uttered a few sentences, you could at once perceive had known better days.

The helpership in a public-house is the laziest, and I may add, the choicest refuge for the broken-down toper in the colonies. In a country where money is so easily made, the usual imbibier is not of necessity poor, as

he is in all other nations. A very moderate amount of work will, in Australia, keep a man from mendicancy ; and one must be a very great toper indeed who can't or won't do sufficient work to pay for his bread. But there are hundreds of such idlers. They are often men who, in Europe, have been brought up to head rather than to hand work, and who, failing in power to change their habits, are but too often unsuccessful in a new country. Many of these public-house odd-men are quondam barristers, attorneys, doctors, clergymen, and the like ; and some are younger sons of younger brothers, (as many of Falstaff's recruits were) who have no profession, but have been sent out from Europe with some capital in their hands, to lose it speedily through lack of business knowledge.

These odd-men are nearly always elderly folk, invariably half-hourly drinkers, commonly great talkers and boasters, and sometimes thieves, and faithless friends. They believe in one powerful man only—the owner of casks of spirits. The publican is to them the impersonation of all influence, mental and

political ; he is the only man they really respect ; they worship him as the distributor of the only joy-giving power on earth. He is their god, and their ruling spirit. If they ever do cherish a dream of advancement—which must be done in their cups, for they never in their sober moments look beyond sunset, and the evening “ nobblers”—it is a vision of being able to set up for themselves a public-house ; and oh, bliss, unutterable ! having gallons and gallons of brandy and rum.

Sometimes, by an unlooked-for stroke of fortune, they do find themselves able to set up a small drinking shop ; but this beatific position is speedily, through their weakness, fallen from—inasmuch as they consume all their own wares—in order to enter a madhouse. This is something of the life and prospects of that very general “ uncle in Australia, who never writes home now ; but who has plenty of money no doubt.” He usually dies in a jail or a hospital, or worse still, in the lone bush, whither he has wandered delirious. A dozen or two chapters of entrancing interest might be written about

the antecedents of colonial publicans' odd-men. How many of them have fallen from their high estate as men of self-respect ; how this man some years ago was a squatter of immense wealth and influence, and that man was the brother of a well known "parliament" nobleman in England ; how one unfortunate's near relative helped to found the London *Punch*, and how the brother-in-law of another was a leading author. And the chapters could contain an account of all the great intellects whose lights had been extinguished in alcohol. Here was one very roughly-spoken old toper, who but the other day, as it were, was a popular preacher in the colony ; he took to wood and water carrying after his dismissal from the church ; his powers of sawing and pumping were soon exhausted by bad whiskey. Here was a quondam colonel—yes, as I live, and no mere "captain"—of a cavalry regiment, whose great points of argument were the *manège* and *écarté*, and who, a couple of years ago, was able, by keeping sober now and then, to earn five or six pounds a week training horses ; but who now was on his last legs,

and hardly able to get in the wood and water, and do the sweeping and horse-cleaning, for which he got his board and lodging. Yes ; men of all sorts, from the gentleman once rich to gentlemen born poor, from the gentleman educated to the one ignorant ; all kinds of broken down aristocracy are represented among the hangers-on of the bush hotel.

As Chartres walked in, he found that all the inmates of the hut were engaged. The hanger-on was reading out of an ancient and horribly dirty Melbourne weekly,—reading one of his own productions which he had written before his fall. The others were eagerly listening. Two were seated on the table, the landlord reclined on his shaky counter with one of his knees in his hands ; four other men were seated on gin-cases, and the reader stood, the candle in his right, the paper in his left hand.

“Good evening, mates !” said the new comer, on the threshold. But no one responded to him in words. Those who sat opposite the doorway gave him a nod, and then looked towards the author as if to direct the new comer’s best attention to the words ;

and then they closed their eyes again for a happy bibulous listen.

Chartres took his cue ; looked about without saying a word for something to sit on, found a chopping block in a corner, and sat down to listen.

In a minute or two one of the drinkers pushed his bottle of stout towards him ; and he took a glass eagerly enough, for he was both thirsty and tired.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Woh—oh, a bit, Jimmy!" cries the landlord. And there is a pause. "It's uncommonly cold up here after sun-down, and there's a southerly wind to-night that makes it colder still."

"*Billy-the-nut*," one of the shepherds, explains. "Aye, it's nigh as cold hereabout in the hot weather as it is elsewhere in the cold. You'll find that out mate afore you're another month here, especially in the evenings."

"I've found it out already, Billy, and I'm going to make up a bit of fire," and the host goes to the door calling out "come on Jimmy, and get some wood, and finish your reading after, old flick."

Jimmy follows; and they are soon both chopping away at the wood outside.

"Don't you forget to make Billy *shout** champagne when you get on a bit with your reading. I have got three cases," the landlord whispers; "and I'd do it soon if I was you. Tell him a gentleman can't read out his own writing on anything under champagne."

To this suggestion Jimmy joyfully assents.

I may here say that "Billy-the-nut" is a shepherd on a neighbouring station, who has just been paid his arrears of salary—upwards of eighty pounds—and he is now on leave of absence for a month, ostensibly to see his friends in Melbourne, but in reality to "knock down" his cheque. A couple of days ago he was on the new track, making his way townward for his "spree," when he came upon an old acquaintance—our landlord; whereupon he gave up his Melbourne trip, and did what other men in his position mostly do after shearing time—lodged his money with his host, with the determination to stay at the shanty and carouse on it to the last penny. He stipulated for a new rig-out from boots to hat, a new bridle for his horse,

* Treat all persons present.

and two sovereigns after his cash was to be spent. He now is in the best period of his beatitude, while his forces are still strong, and his taste for liquors still growing sharper, until the "horrors" come on, when, of course, his landlord is to act judiciously, and get him quickly round again for another bout. The other shepherd is one of Billy's mates, who was sent for express that afternoon to come and spend the evening at the shanty.

"I'll be back!" says the mate to his hut-keeper, Johnny, "afore twelve or one o'clock to-night. But if I ain't, mind and don't forget the sheep, old boy."

"All right, Billy. But for G—'s sake mind how you carry the bottles of whiskey, and don't let 'em knock together, or agin the saddle;" the hut-keeper says, in an agony of apprehension.

"Don't you fear, old man," Billy proudly responds; "I'll drink with any man, and I'll carry a bottle too. When I roll off my horse I never fall on the drink, and I never let the horse hurt it either; he may kick and walk over me, but I'll swear he won't on it."

"Aye, Billy, I know you're one of the

cleverest hands in the colony at carrying the liquor ; but don't be——”

“ Pish, Johnny ! don't you begin croaking. And mind you, if the old chap (the master) kicks up any bobbery about the sheep, I'll smash the bottles when I bring 'em back ; so you'll see all square for me about the animals, or I'll smash the bottles. I will by— !” and the speaker raises his arm to emphasise the oath.

The other catches it nervously.

“ Don't, Billy ! I'll mind 'em as if they was my own. I will so help me. But don't talk about breaking the blessed drink ; I can't bear to hear on it !”

And off Billy rides, leaving his mate to count the lagging hours until his return with the “joy-giver.” The hut-keeper will have the place swept and garnished that night for Billy's return. The fire will burn brightly, and the water will bubble cheerfully all through that night. The table will be laid out with its broken teacup and its pannikins, and its wedge of damper, and its lumps of fresh and salt meat ; even the old tin mustard-case, used as a tallow lamp, will be refilled

and re-wickt, and polished ; aye, towards the small hours of the morning, as the expected arrival draws nearer, and the wits grow sharper with expectancy, some logs of wood will be placed upon the crooked table, and carefully covered with rags, to make a secure place for Billy's precious burden. But with all his friend's affectionate forethought and care, no Billy will make the air musical with the "track" of his horse's feet that evening. Nodding, discomfiture and despair will come to the solitary inmate of the swept and garnished house ; but not Billy. The hut will remain a hut all that night ; it will not be changed into one of the enchanted palaces of eastern tale and western alcohol. It is not my wish to moralise here ; I only ask is it any wonder that the lonely bushman should fly to drink as his one pleasure ? Is it any wonder that he should love, even in imagination, to exchange his worse than pigstye dwelling for a castle. He has not a single refinement of life connected with his dwelling or sustenance ; but he can find a delight in spirits. Can we wonder that he so often seizes upon it !

The landlord and his man soon make up a good fire ; and the seats are drawn round it ; those who are at a distance from the table setting their liquor on the earth beside them. These movements give Chartres and his new acquaintances leisure to observe each other.

“ Come from Melbourne, mate ?” asks one of the reefers. Chartres answers in the affirmative. “ It’s lucky you didn’t go much beyond this place after sundown, as some does. You’ll be comfortable enough here.”

“ Why shouldn’t I have been comfortable further on ?” Chartres inquires.

“ Because, from a mile beyond here to the next rise in the track, ten miles away, there isn’t as much wood as would singe a cat’s whiskers. It’s all broken ground too.”

Chartres is soon asked whether he is an old digger, or only a novice ; and he tells the truth.

“ I thought so,” says one of the men ; “ by the colour of your hands, and the cut of your jib altogether. Besides, I can see how tired you are, and it is not a tramp from Melbourne to here as would knock up a regular digger.”

“Well, there’s one thing fortunate for a new beginner like him,” says the host, who is not yet reseated, inasmuch as he is in readiness for the order for champagne, which is pretty sure to be given. “He can have as warm and comfortable a bed afore the fire there as a man could wish. And I know he’ll find us all good company.”

“No better, mate!” Chartres answers, falling quite naturally into the bush phraseology. *Mate*, I may explain, is a term of friendliness ; but *matey* is one of endearment itself, quite a word, indeed, following the Italian system of adjectives of love or contempt. I don’t however know what Dr. Latham would think of it.

“I have been listening to the reading ; it’s first rate !” the new digger says.

“Isn’t it ?” is the appreciative chorus.

“And the reader is also the writer,” explains the author of the sketch. Twice before has this been proudly told to the assembly ; but Chartres has come in since that time.

“Yes, Jimmy old boy, you’re a long-headed chap enough,” the shepherd with the cheque remarks, slapping the author on the shoulder.

"And if you would only be steady like me here, you'd write a big book mayhap, and put us all in it, and make a fortune to boot."

"I'll see about it, mate!" Jimmy sententiously replies, as if the thing were of the smallest importance in life. "It is only the bothering copying-out that one cares about; if that hadn't to be done I could turn out books quick enough;" and Jimmy looks round to see the effect of his assertion. He is accustomed to be sneered at in society whenever he boasted too much of his talents; but to-night here nobody in the room doubts them. Is he not before them in print itself?

"Aye, Jimmy, you'll do it by-and-by," the landlord says, laughing; "when you keep from turning up your little finger so often. But in the meantime go on with your reading, and let us hear the rest of the story."

Jimmy takes up his candle and paper, and begins reading in a husky tone. "D—— the cobwebs!" he says haughtily, as he clears his throat.

"Here, old man, take a drop of brandy, and order another to it if you want your

whistle kept moist," the wealthy shepherd says, with the air of a host.

"No, thank you, mate," says Jimmy ; "the brandy is too strong for the throat—the pharynx—when a man is reading aloud. Wine is the only thing for him then ; wine and eggs, or wine without the eggs even."

"Then have a glass of wine, Jimmy !" a reefer cries. "Hang it, it is not every day a man has the honour of hearing an author reading his own works."

"He drinks with me, mate !" the shepherd proudly says.

"Never mind," is the reply.

"But I do mind ; he has drunk with me all yesterday and to-day, and will again to-morrow and next day for that matter. Jimmy is my friend."

"Wo, all ! Stop !" the host cries ; "Jimmy says he can't read on nothing but wine. That must be champagne—if that kind will do, Jimmy ? for I have no other sort."

"And champagne it shall be. Here, bring us a bottle !" cries the elated reefer.

"Many thanks, mate," Jimmy says in his most gentlemanly style, and with his best

bow ; “ but would one bottle be worth sharing ? I don’t think my vital chords would vibrate sonorously if the mind were not at ease.”

“ Hear him—hear him !” cries the shepherd and the host.

Jimmy bows ot them ; “ And I am convinced that the mental powers would not or could not put forth their best energies, perceiving but half-filled glasses and an empty flask beside me.”

“ Look here, Jimmy !” the host now says authoritatively ; “ drink with one man or the other. Whoever he is, will, of course, ‘ shout ’ like a gentleman, enough for all hands.”

“ Then,” says the author, “ my friend Billy, my old and tried friend,”—he had never seen him until three days before—“ in contradistinction to my new and already valued friend shall be the man.”

“ Give me your hand, Jimmy !” cries the shepherd in an ecstasy of drunken admiration.

“ I have done my best,” the author says in his most grandiloquent style of oratory ; “ and I leave the issue to Providence !”

“ Good—good again !” is the chorus on

all hands. And at the appearance of the champagne everybody is satisfied. Three bottles, at a pound a bottle, are laid on the table.

Then all sit quietly listening while Jimmy finishes his reading.

By that time the champagne has worked both itself and its forerunners from the stomachs of the drinkers up into their brains ; and now the talking becomes fast and furious. The author assuredly had already got his full share of glory among his illiterate audience. Had he been Dickens or Lytton, he wouldn't have been thought much more of—at least on account of his literary powers. But when the brain is alcoholised, men prefer talking of themselves, and their own adventures, rather than those of other people, and so the conversation soon falls away from Jimmy's literary production to the deeds of the talkers themselves. Now this does not at all please the author, who, like all his tribe, is capable of swallowing praise and admiration to any amount ; and consequently after his unsuccessful efforts to keep the conversation all bearing upon himself, Jimmy became rather

a listener than a speaker. He drinks, however—in fact, never for a quarter of an hour at a time ceases imbibing at everybody's expense—and thus at the end of an hour or two, about nine o'clock, he is at his best. His mental powers, or at least their remains, are quickened by his potions—as Lady Macbeth's were. Drunk he never is the whole evening, from the simple fact that it would have been next to impossible to make him quite intoxicated. For the past fifteen years he has been almost existing on alcohol; and what would certainly stupefy two ordinary hard drinkers, only rouses him up to his best point.

At one period in the evening he told his history with such addenda and corrigenda as seemed suitable to the time and company. He said his father had been a general in the Indian army; that he also was to have been a soldier, but preferred, on becoming privately married to a poor though highly-connected squire's daughter, taking his patrimony of five thousand pounds from his guardian and emigrating. At the time he began to come down in the world he was, he said, a

squatter on the Murrumbidgee River, and after his becoming a street minstrel (which he had been) he soon lost his wife by diphtheria, which fact Chartres took leave to doubt, inasmuch as at the time she was said to have died, diphtheria was not known. He then went to the diggings and was doing very well indeed as shareholder in a reef, when the rheumatism threw him down, and finally left him totally unfit for hard work. "Not that he hadn't the use of his limbs, but that steady work didn't agree with his constitution," such was his own account of himself.

He did not relate what Chartres afterwards learned on the diggings about him—that after his failure as a squatter he got an excellent billet as editor and part proprietor of a country newspaper which brought him in seven or eight hundred a year, and that he became such an utter drunkard that his wife had to beseech her friends to take her away from him; that the wretched woman fled to England in the steerage of a vessel, and used for years afterwards earnestly to inquire of his friends whether he had at all

amended, or even showed signs of so doing, in order that she might at once come to him and try to keep him in the right path. He didn't mention how many times he had been in jail as a vagrant, or how many employers he had drawn advance-wages from and then deserted. He attributed all his misfortunes to rheumatism. "Alcohol had never done him anything but good." Even now, degraded as he is, he is a wonderful ruin. His knowledge of classics, modern language, including his native tongue, and science, really such as to make a man admire him were he in any station however high. Probably he would have turned out a lead author had he possessed common industry. Seven or eight years ago he still could and play his piano and guitar, though his voice and his touch are gone. Short afterwards told Chartres that he known him to take as much as three pounds of a Saturday evening in Bendigo for tunes and songs.

This is "Jimmy the General," as known, and wonderful to relate he has with his present proprietor for upw

two years past, moving with him from "rush" to "rush," and really bringing some custom to his master from the great number of his bibulous acquaintances, and his repute.

As the time passes on, and when Jimmy has piled up a heap of logs on the blazing fire, it is determined by the visitors that they will camp that night where they are, instead of waiting till the moon gets up and pushing farther on to the creek.

"You needn't fear for your horses, mates," Billy-the-Nut assures them, "for I know where they'll be sure to feed and to water in the morning; and I can run them in for you as safe as if they was never away from the door."

And thereupon the poor animals are relieved of their saddles and bridles, hobbled and belled, and with a couple of kicks away they go. Then all hands turn indoors again; the kettle is replenished from the water-cask, and the grog circulates.

"I'll tell you what it is," says Chartres, after about an hour's conversation, or rather listening, for he was too tired to roar loud enough to take his share of the talk, "I'm

very tired ; and I'll lie down ;" and the landlord having brought in a few empty sacks he does lie down under the supper table, and covering his face with his rug tries to sleep.

"Poor fellow," says one of the reefers, when they think the stranger is asleep, "I am thinking he won't dig very long up here."

"No," says another, "he's like a young bear, all his troubles to come. I wonder what and who he is, for he ain't a new-chum in the colony."

"I am, gentlemen, in a position to inform you what he is," Jimmy says authoritatively.

"He is like myself, a gentleman born and bred. We high folk are not easy to be deceived by the exterior of a man."

"I'm thinking, Jimmy, that if he's much like you he won't do much credit to his kind," the shepherd on a visit says archly.

"For that matter, my son, we all have our whims and our freaks," Jimmy replies, with the air of a prince in masquerade.

Everybody laughs heartily at this, and the speaker becomes wrathful. "Yes," he cries, slapping the table, "little as you all may

understand us, your superiors, you ought at least to have read or heard of the self-imposed adventures and even hardships of well-bred gentlemen."

This produces a still louder laugh ; and Jimmy stands up and glares round the assemblage. " May I inquire what you plebeians are all sniggering at ?" he asks grandly.

" I don't know what plebeens is, Jimmy," one of the reefers remarks, " but I should like to know when you are going to be a credit to the big men ?"

" There's plenty of time for that, I may inform you, Sir. If I were as old as you are or your friend there, I shouldn't say this. But young men up to five-and-thirty will have their self-imposed adventures after the goddess Fortune."

The landlord appears to know what is to come, for he winks at his visitors.

" Why, good heavens, you don't mean to call yourself a young man of five-and-thirty ?" the reefer asks. He is not yet that age himself, while Jimmy is over sixty and quite gray-headed.

" Most assuredly I do," the author un-

hesitatingly says. "If trouble has made me look a bit old, it hasn't added years to my age."

"Well, after that!" the other says perfectly aghast.

"Yes, Sir, you may well say 'after that!' when you have taken the gross liberty to appear to doubt the assertion of a gentleman of birth and education. If," he continues, rising in his indignation as the silence of the other men gives him encouragement to do, "if you fancy you can insult me with impunity because I am a gentleman in reduced circumstances you may find out your mistake. I will stoop to fight you when and where you like, with sword or pistol, and I will send you off the ground a wiser man than you now are!"

"Hear, hear!" cries the host, who now whispers to the irate general, "sit down, Jimmy. Treat the fellows with silent contempt, you know."

"And, and I may say that I can only henceforth treat you and such fellows as you in silent con—" He sits down to clinch his speech—and finds himself on his back!

His employer had silently shifted his seat.

It is just as well that everybody shrieks with laughter at this event; for the noise serves to drown the astounding volleys of curses and blasphemies which issue with amazing volubility from the well-bred gentleman's lips.

Chartres, who had dozed off, is awakened by the uproar; and after vainly trying to sleep again, finds he is too full of aches to do so, therefore he gets up and rejoins the company. The somewhat astonished reefers, who at first do not know what to make out of the threatening author, now take his measure from the landlord's serving him the chair-trick. They perceive he is harmless enough, much as his kind at other public-houses; so all is soon made peaceful again with the aid of a round of brandy. And after this, one of the party relates some of his adventures in California and New Zealand.

"I find," Chartres says to Jimmy the General, who by twelve o'clock is the only one of the party not helplessly drunk, "that grog for once has done me good instead of

harm. It has taken away all my aches and cramps, and now has made me feel sleepy into the bargain."

"Grog can do no man anything but good, my friend," is the answer.

And Chartres turns in under his table to sleep. Jimmy lies down in front of the fire, after the others have all toddled off to their make-shift couches in the room behind. And the last thing Chartres sleepily sees and hears, is the General, with the candle on the floor beside him, reading a black and tattered octavo "*Juvenal*," lying on his back and puffing away loudly at his stuffed pipe.

"I am afraid," Chartres says, "you must sadly lack companionship of your own calibre, leading this life. Would you not find even digging more comfortable?"

"My dear fellow," the General murmurs gently ; "*laissez-moi tranquille*. My *Juvenal* is friend enough for me for one half year, and my Horace, or Dante, or Shakespeare for another. I am a degenerate follower of Epicurus, though I think a better philosopher than he was. By living thus I have food, clothes, and shelter, and as to-night you have

seen, every passing guest supplies me with a higher pleasure than a ride over my own estate could afford me. A happy mind is the aim of every man's efforts. This," holding up his half-empty glass which he—previous to lying down, has filled from the remains of the unfinished "nobblers" on the table—"makes me above all care; truly, aye truly happier than a king. What more should I now, in my decline of years, desire?"

"But is there no higher aim than present happiness, no matter how the latter may be secured?" asks Chartres, for the sake of hearing this outcast man's reply.

"So long as a man injures nobody in seeking his own happiness, he cannot do harm to himself in obtaining it in this world."

"And the other?"

"*Bah, mon ami*, go to sleep, and we'll talk in the morning!"

And Chartres soon does as he is bid.

The first sounds he hears after this are those of a lot of horses trampling round the shanty; the next, the clatter of pannikins and knives on the table over him. When he opens his eyes, he finds himself surrounded

by a forest of legs and boots ; but he dozes off again, for he is still fatigued ; and when he awakes again, he finds himself alone. He would dearly like to sleep once more ; but the sun—through the openings between the slabs of the house tells him that it can't be far off ten o'clock in the forenoon, by which time he recollects he ought to have had the best half of the day's journey over. When he gets on his legs, he finds he can hardly stand, and what with his back and limb pains, and his headache from his slight debauch—he had taken only three glasses of brandy—of the night before, he is glad to sit down awhile to steady himself. His tongue is as dry as a blanket, and as woolly ; and spying the water-jug on the counter, he drinks about a pint of its contents.

“Take a hair of the dog that bit you,” the General is heard to cry from outside the door ; and the host and his man both enter together.

“Do as he tells you, mate,” the landlord advises ; “or you'll be knocked-up the whole blessed day.”

Chartres follows their directions, with what

magical effect most men know from experience. He then washes face and head with ice-cold water ; and the host having offered him breakfast, he helps himself to some of the General's excellent home-made hop-yeast bread, and after a pipe, goes on his way.

He can't see much concerning his whereabouts for the first quarter of an hour after leaving the shanty, because of the hollow he is in, and its dense timber. But when he pushes up the ascent in front of him, and comes to the turn of the track on the top, he is obliged to stop and admire and worship the universal mother. I won't try much of word-painting here ; but I must say how the glorious scenery of the hills affects Chartres as he gazes on it, for the first time. Since his "hair of the dog that bit him," and breakfast and wash, all the remains of his aches have vanished, as if by magic. After ten minutes walking, the stiffness of his limbs also disappears ; and so far from feeling a worse man—as to muscle—than he was in Melbourne, he feels a hundred times better.

He was certainly never made for a sedentary life, and he knows it. His constitution,

naturally robust, has been really weakened by want of open air and vigorous exercise. “I think I should be a happier man if I were a ploughman,” he used to say to Lucy, in after times, after a day’s hard riding, or other muscular exercise; “I feel another being to what I was in Melbourne.” And, indeed, he looks strong and healthy enough, even the first day after his *sub Jove* work. It is perfectly wonderful to see the change three days’ open air exercise makes in his appearance.

This morning, after all the unusual fatigue of yesterday, and the hard couch of the night before, he is, in appearance, to all intents and purposes, a different man to what he was in Melbourne. His pallid city face is coloured with sunburn; his skin is become as clear as linen, and—as Bulwer says—“of that superb tint which men who have lived in tropical countries have.” His limbs are steadier and stronger, his chest fuller, and his shoulders squarer. With this vigour of health and circulation, his spirits are even more altered for the better than his body. This morning he really feels and looks strong and hopeful. “The world is before me,” he thinks, as he

stands and looks round on the glorious hills ; “ I have left the dear ones at home with means of support for a little time ; Lucy’s school will help her so that she shall not soon want. Why then should I grieve any longer ? I’ll work hard, please heaven, to get a little capital ; and then hurrah for the bush for ever ! Let it be reefing, squatting, farming, vine-growing—anything in the glorious health-giving country ; a town life I never will lead again. And why should I not succeed on this new “ rush,” as well as many another. True, the fortunate gold-finder is usually a man brought up to hard labour ; but I can learn to labour too ! I have a good constitution, and please Providence, muscles and not brain-work will support me. Hands in Australia are more money gaining than heads !”

If Lucy, who at this moment is sitting at home fondling the children and whispering over them about dear papa, and the troubles and dangers he is amidst for their sake—if she could see her husband’s bright countenance as he stands alone on the mountain-side, her grief would change to joy, and her fears to hopes.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHARTRES didn't arrive at the scene of his future labours until the third day after this. He was lighter-hearted than ever ; he felt as strong as a young bullock, and was rejoiced to find that all those chest aches and heart throbings—which for some months past he had believed to be signs of heart disease—were now no more, and had evidently been the results of a sedentary and changeless mode of living. He confidently trusted in his capacity for hard manual labour now. O, those megrims and blue-devils of a house life ! how he laughed at them ; and how fervently he determined nevermore to put himself in their way !

It was just before sundown when he came in sight of the new township, which had sprung up around the principal “claims.”

He stood on a rise, and could see his new home plainly. On that wretched false rush he had been to in the north, there was nothing but a few holes in the ground, and a few heaps of dirt beside them ; for the worthlessness of the place had speedily become apparent. But here for three or four miles in a line were all the surroundings of gold-mining—drams, drafts, crushing machines, puddling mills, pumps, and other appliances, even down to the humble “cradle.” The place was a vast concourse of canvas tents and wooden houses. There was already a main street more than half a mile long, and here the stores were all either corrugated iron or weatherboard. It was the first successful digging township Chartres had seen. Here were scores of the usual Australian stores containing everything, from needles to carts ; drapery, grocery, hardware, and soft goods all together. There were public-houses too in abundance ; it seemed as if they outnumbered all other stores put together. Here and there were large square wooden buildings, from which the sounds of cornet and violin were issuing. These were the inevitable

dance-houses, where—especially on Saturday—the goddess Terpsichore was worshipped. Barbers' shops were just now in full work, trimming up their customers for the Sunday-morrow: and the butchers' stalls, filled with plenty of good (and bad) beef and mutton, veal and pork, were busy with customers.

Bakers' stores too were abundant; a number of them showed great plenty of good hard raspberry tarts and plum-cake in shilling-squares. Even fruit shops and greengrocers were not wanting, wherein all kinds of green vegetables might be had in shilling's-worth. For these green necessaries, John China has to be thanked here as in most of inland places in Australia. He it is who grew vegetables in the sandy interior, nothing but the salt-bush—fine food for sheep though—was, by the white man, supposed to be able to flourish. To his industry and system of irrigation and of the mighty river Murray, indeed their lettuces and cabbages, which, by appearance, had been rare luxuries up by the mailmen, or carried as pic-

friends returning from favoured localities. It is John who showed us, that wherever there is earth and water there can be vegetables too in plenty. And it pays John to grow them, who sometimes, out of his half-acre by the river side or lagoon, turns in his pound or so a day ; in the dry season, too, when all gardens but his are deserts.

John, poor barbarian, has, like his betters, his faults ; but he is an improvable creature in spite of all said to the contrary ; and if he knew better he would act better. His *black-brute* of sins is his being wife and childless among us. But when John does marry, even though his European wife is always some outcast woman, he generally becomes a model of all that is right and proper, barring his little gambling transactions. And how much worse is he in this respect, I should like to know, than our own grandfathers ? Fowls are the one game which even the otherwise honest Celestial seems driven by fate to hanker after. I don't believe Chinamen think it a sin to appropriate the contents of an European's hen-roost, any more than Paddy or Giles thinks it a crime to kill his master's

hare or pheasant. He will have his game, will poach, even though he angle for his prey like a fisherman with a veritable bait, hook, and line, which, by the way, he often does from the outside of a fence, or through a fowl-house window.

Chartres was glad to see several board and lodging houses in the street, whose charges varied from one pound a week upwards ; and he determined to stay for his first week at one of these places, while he looked about for a mate who understood mining. So he entered a house, comfortable enough looking inside, and having set down his "swag," and seen his iron bedstead, he adjourned to wash. He then went out to see the fair—for after his four days' solitary travel the place appeared like a fair to him—and to spend his evening at some decent public-house, where he could learn the news of the place.

His first enquiry was for the Post-office ; and this was pointed out to him. It was one of the finest looking and the best stocked stores in the place. Its contents, unsorted and unadorned as they were, could not have been worth much less than four or five thousand

pounds. The prices of a few articles of every storekeeping kind soon mounts up to a great sum. To purchase half-a-dozen only of every necessity of a township, costs more than to buy hundreds of each kind of article appertaining strictly to one sort of trade. Most of the *omnium gatherum* good bush stores contain considerably more wealth than the magnificent shop of a west-end tradesman.

Chartres went into the Post-office for his letters; and whom should he find the owner of all the goods therein, but an old English acquaintance of the name of Wilkins. Now, much as he had been accustomed to see a change for the better in the sober man of a year's residence in the colony, he could hardly believe that this was the John Wilkins of old times.

Mr. Wilkins, merchant, member of the shire-council, and J.P. of the territory of Victoria, stood before Chartres. This man came out in the steerage of a ship, with his pretty, though vulgar-looking, wife and four children. In London, he had been an unsuccessful hay and corn dealer; was still a young

fellow in his “thirties,” and here he stood now, an independent man—though so lately but a poor emigrant! Chartres had to look at him half-a-dozen times over the letter he was reading, as he stood in the middle of the store—had to glance at Wilkins, scrutinizing him as he leaned with one elbow on his counter reading the last *London Punch*; and even after all this, Chartres was not quite sure of his man until Wilkins called out some direction to one of his shopmen. Then the poor gentleman was sure of his rich plebeian acquaintance, and was glad to see him; he walked over to the counter and held out his hand.

“Wilkins! Bless my soul, old fellow—how are you? And to find you here so comfortable!”

“Mr. Chartres? By Jingo!—and digging too! I am delighted to see you.”

“And so you are the fortunate lord and master of this store, Wilkins? What a lucky fellow! Do you remember that celebrated table?” This last, in reference to a table Chartres had once allowed refuge in his house when poor Wilkins was sold off for rent.

“Hush!” Wilkins whispered, glancing

towards his two shopmen, who were getting some goods indoors from a wagon. "Come in, Sir? The wife will be so glad to see you. Bob, look after the store."

"All right, Sir!" Bob answered.

"My wife met you, Mr. Chartres, about a month ago, in Melbourne, and your good lady was with you; and she thought you were too proud to speak to her though; so she passed on," Wilkins said in the most innocent way, looking back over his wealthy store, as much as if he would say "although you are the poor man now and I the rich one."

"Wilkins, how dare you, you heretic, talk such nonsense as this?" Chartres says laughing.

"Well, I am only joking, Mr. Chartres; but Margaret wasn't, I can assure you."

"Then I will scold her well for it this moment. But, by Jove, you have a regular city establishment here, my friend!"

"Pooh, nothing!" Wilkins returned; "But sit down and try this curacao, while I tell all my little flock you are here."

These diggings had not been opened much more than three months, but as there were quartz-reefs on them as well as alluvial

ground, there would be employment for men and machinery for some time to come. So the three or four wealthiest storekeepers of the place put up better than the customary "ramshackle" buildings, and brought their families to reside with them. Wilkins's house was of corrugated iron, on a wooden frame of course. Across the inner side of this frame was tightly stretched canvas ; and this being papered over on the top with white ceiling paper and on the sides with the usual room-paper, and the floors and windows being as in other houses, the building was not to be known by sight from the ordinary brick and mortar kind. It was the general room in which Chartres now sat, and surprisingly neat and comfortable it appeared, considering that every one of its pine boards and every bit of its furniture had been carried from Melbourne across the mountains. "What keeps out the cold keeps out heat too," and instead of canvas and wall-paper, this particular sitting-room was lined with drugget of a very pretty pattern, which gave a capital and even rich effect to the walls. The ceiling was covered with white paper, varnished, so as to be

washed after the flies and other winged pests ; and doors and windows being very nicely coloured like maple, and the floor carpeted, one would not think it was the room of a very recent "rush," at all events. An Australian cedar table stood in the middle of the room, two others stood by the wall, a comfortable morocco leather-covered sofa and two maple rocking chairs, a cedar book-case, half-a-dozen expensive bamboo Chinese chairs, and powers of the earth ! an Erard piano—all these were in the room as well.

What books were in the book-case, and on the smallest side-table ? We may notice first a large Doré Bible, then two or three Church-services in all sorts of rich covers, with exquisitely bound hymn-books and psalters. There was an expensive Shakespeare, and a volume or two of the *Cornhill* and *All the Year Round* ; while in the cedar case were such works as those by Scott, Longfellow, Byron, Moore, and a host of others ; histories of everywhere, and finally prose works of nearly every author from Fielding to Dickens and Thackeray, with numerous volumes of travels.

In the corners of the room were heaps of newspapers and magazines, and on the walls hung maps of Victoria and London, a "stream of history," and a chart entitled "Views of Nature in all Latitudes;" but above all, we musn't omit a geological plan of the colony of Victoria. A man might have imagined himself rather in a small library in London, than in the every-use room of a shopkeeper on a new "rush," amid the primeval forests of a new land.

Chartres was the man, above all others, who strongly advised Wilkins, when he failed in business, to emigrate to America or Australia. He saw that a well behaved and industrious man like his humble friend—one striving to educate himself, and not given to the public-house—would be likely to do well in the colonies. True, in England, he seemed not so energetic as he now was, and yet he had been always far from an unenterprising man, at least in ideas.

But Chartres was not at all prepared to see the difference democratic and thriving institutions had made in him. It was Saturday—we know—which is the weekly secular holi-

day of the diggers, and upon which day most of them and their families are often dressed in their gala clothing, or, at all events, somewhat "titivated up." Now this accounted for Wilkins's prolonged absence, for truth is, that Mrs. Wilkins was just now hard at work cooking for the morrow, with her two servants, and so she had to "tidy" herself before receiving such an honoured guest as her old London condescending friend, Mr. Chartres. She came blushing into the room behind her husband ; and she too was a new Margaret Wilkins. She looked very unlike the careworn woman of the past. Even now she was but a young woman of thirty-four, and looked still younger. A stranger might have taken her for a girl of five-and-twenty ; whereas, had she remained in England, she might no doubt by this time have easily been taken for a woman of five and-forty. She really looked at the first glance uncommonly like a "born lady," from her newly acquired deportment ; she moved much like one too, and sat like one ; and it was only in the pitch of the voice that an acute observer would have at once been

undeceived. Her grammar, too, was but poor. Occasionally, the asperates were not to be heard, and once or twice "we was" slipped out ; but a conscious blush and an appealing look at her husband showed how she knew her errors. She was really delighted to see her old friend ; and as she held out her hand to him said, "Oh, Mr. Chartres ! how really glad I am to see you."

"Ah! But for all that I have to scold you."

"Why, Mr. Chartres?"

"Because you told your husband you thought I was too proud to speak to you one day you saw me in Melbourne."

"And so I did, Sir ; I really did," she affirms shyly. She was thinking of the old cowering days in England.

"Things are different here you know, Margaret," her husband said proudly. He had no thought of offending Chartres ; but still he could not help asserting his new dignities.

Chartres did not feel annoyed ; but he feigned being so. "Can you say, Mr. Wilkins, that you ever found me different?"

This, and “Oh, John! Mr. Chartres, our kind friend, you know, when we were in trouble!” attacked him on both sides; and he saw how far he had gone.

“No, Margaret, my dear; Mr. Chartres was always what he was born, and can’t help being, if he hadn’t a shoe to his foot—a gentleman; he knows I didn’t refer to him.”

Whereupon Chartres professed, &c. &c. And after this, the history of the Wilkins family, father and mother, daughter of sixteen and three little boys, was related to him by those most interested therein.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.







